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ABSTRACT

This proceedings of a conference focusing on the school-community relationship contains eight papers. "A Changing Rural America: The Context for School/Community Development" compares community development with economic development and offers suggestions for rural schools to participate in community development. "Integrating the Local Community into Rural School Curriculum" advocates community-based curriculum which teaches cooperation, the role of citizens, and leadership development. "School Based Community Development: Making Connections for Improved Learning" provides guiding principles for second-order restructuring. "Education as an Investment in Local Community Development" examines the conceptual linkage between education and economic growth and discusses education in a production function framework and reviews research findings on input/output relationships in education. "Successful Community Development Strategies" documents cases in which rural communities have had success in changing their economic circumstances. "Overcoming Barriers to Rural School Leadership in Community Development" presents positive, proactive approaches for personnel decisions, curriculum, community education, educational leadership, and resource attainment. "Building Partnerships for People: Addressing the Rural South's Human Capital Needs" explores the near and long-term human resource issues facing the rural South. Lastly, "Summary of Comments" presents seven propositions based on important points raised during the conference. (KS)

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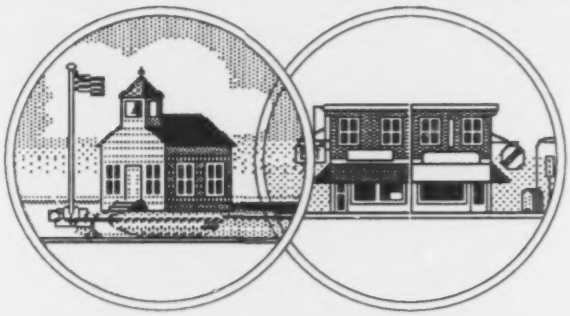

A Working Regional Conference: The Role of Education in Rural Community Development

AEL

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Conference Proceedings

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INTRODUCTION

Recent literature in rural education and rural development reflects an increasing interest in the relationship between schools and rural communities. All schools impact the communities in which they are located. Rural schools, however, because of geographic isolation often have a broader impact on their communities both socially and economically. The rural school is often the cultural and social hub of the community. Likewise, the economic value represented by community investments in school facilities and equipment, and the resources devoted to education often represents the largest single expenditure of locally generated tax revenues.

To learn more about rural schools throughout the United States, three years ago the Congress enacted legislation called the Rural Education Initiative. The monies appropriated by the Congress were given to the nine Regional Education Laboratories with the charge to study rural schools, pilot test school improvements, and highlight promising practices in which rural schools were engaged. The conference represented through this proceedings document is a direct result of this Rural Education Initiative.

In November 1988 the Appalachia Educational Laboratory, as part of its Rural Education Initiative, convened a multidisciplinary research advisory group known as the Regional Rural Roundtable to address pertinent issues in the area of rural education research. This group of researchers took the lead to enhance the work of the Lab in its School-Community Improvement Process by focusing on discussions of the role of school in rural development. The Rural, Small Schools staff of the Lab took the richness of these discussions to develop the conference, "The Role of Schools in Rural Community Development." Given the similarities between the Appalachian Lab's service area and the southeast in general, the Southeastern Educational Improvement Laboratory as well as the Southern Rural Development Center were invited to co-sponsor this meeting with AEL. What follows are the major presentations from the conference.

The conference presenters themselves represented the multidisciplinary thinking that had its roots in the Regional Rural Roundtable. Agricultural Economists, Rural Sociologists, and Educators all provided insight into the complex issue of rural community development and the integral role of the rural school. These papers reflect the current trends in the linkages of community development and education. From human capital theory to experiential education, life-long learning to delivery of social service, and school finance and local governance issues -- all of these topics are addressed in these papers.

The 1990s will be a time when new collaborative efforts between both the Land Grant Universities and their Cooperative Extension Community Development Specialists, and State and local educators will become more widespread. By addressing the needs of school/community improvements, along with experiential and life-long learning possibilities, both groups will be able to strengthen their efforts for rural revitalization beyond that which they could accomplish independently. This proceedings document demonstrates the mutual areas of concern and that this represents only the first step to a long and productive era of collaboration ahead.

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A CHANGING RURAL AMERICA: THE CONTEXT FOR SCHOOL/COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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INTRODUCTION

Education and community development are both the subject of increasing interest in recent years. Rural communities, and the businesses and industries operating within those communities, are undergoing (have undergone) profound social and economic change. Successful communities and businesses/industries of the future will be different from those that currently exist in many rural areas. Different rural development strategies will be required. Likewise, different educational policies and programs will be needed to ensure a cadre of adequately trained community/business leaders and community residents/workers.

Policymakers face the challenge of creating rural communities that are attractive to new technology-based, knowledge oriented industries. Educators face the challenge of training individuals to live and work in those communities and industries. Rural America is changing, and both development policy and education policy must be re-examined in light of those changes. Policymakers must consider the linkages between schools and communities that will be required to implement successful rural education and rural development programs.

This paper explores community and community/economic development. I will explore major changes occurring in rural areas in general and, where appropriate, the rural South in particular. Also included is a discussion of the implications for education and community development programs. The final section of the paper offers specific suggestions relative to the role of the educational system in rural community development.

UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

It is useful to examine the concept of community and the idea of development within the community context.[1] Unfortunately, the terms involved are somewhat nebulous and are used by different people to mean different things at different times (Wilkinson, 1988; Shaffer, 1989). The terms "community development" and "economic development" are often used interchangeably to refer to community growth as measured in demographic or economic terms. Here, following Wilkinson (1988) and Shaffer (1989), the term "community development" is used to refer to activities which increase a community's capacity to organize, identify common interests, and to act on behalf of those interests. "Economic development" refers to those structural changes which increase the capacity of a local area to generate income and employment. Community/economic development is a process focused on expanding a community's capacity to deal with common problems. Likewise, such development involves the capacity to sustain economic activity over time.

The word "community," usually refers to some particular place expressed in geographic terms. However, geographic place, in and of itself, is inadequate as a definition of community for this discussion. There must be some reference to a set of mutual interactions and some common interests to be served by those interactions (Shaffer, 1989). This is not to imply that education or community development programs can or should be implemented without regard to place. Rather, it is to stress the importance of common interests in the development process.. Likewise, successful development development programs require the ability to act on those interests.

Moreover, thinking of a community as a geographic place while keeping place considerations secondary to common interests, allows consideration of the dynamic aspects of the community concept. It allows the geographic boundaries of a community to change with a different set of interests, and it allows for the existence of functional sub-communities within the boundaries of a larger community. Additionally, this approach to thinking of a community allows for the regionalization of development activities where common interests extend across several geographically defined communities. Such an approach recognizes that communities compete with each other in a variety of economic and political arenas, and that events in any particular community are strongly influenced by ties to the larger community of which it is a part (Shaffer, 1989; Shaffer and Summers, 1988).

In addition, distinction can now be made between community development and economic development and between the idea of development and growth. As noted earlier, the term "develop" is often used to refer to community growth. This growth can be measured in demographic terms or economic terms. The related term "development" is commonly used to refer to particular happenings in particular communities. This would include such things as a new shopping center, a new/expanded business, an industrial plant, or a new sub-division. Such references often refer only to the quantifiable aspects of growth without reference to structural or institutional change in the community. In contrast "development" as used here presumes structural and institutional change and requires explicit consideration of equity issues (Wilkinson, 1988; Shaffer, 1989; Shaffer and Summers, 1988; Ryan, 1987; Coffey and Polese, 1984; Flammang, 1979). Development is certainly related to community/economic growth and is often measured using the same variables. However, development implies considerably more than community growth alone.

Community development refers to those changes which increase the capacity of a group of people to identify and act on common interests. In the words of Wilkinson (1988), community development means, "...building (or at least trying to build) the capacity for self-help and self-direction through community action." Economic development differs from community development only in that it focuses more narrowly on improving a community's ability to generate income and employment over an extended period.

Community development is related to and can result in economic development. Linkages, however may be indirect and long run in nature. For example, community development programs to improve education, provide better public services, or improve environmental quality may make significant contributions to economic development. Likewise, a lack of economic development as reflected in high unemployment, inadequate public services, and high levels of inequality. Such inequity can detract from a community's capacity to work together on behalf of common interests. Alternatively, economic improvements which reduce income inequality and improve services may contribute to community development (Ryan, 1987; Wilkinson, 1988).

Either economic development or community development may be accompanied by or result from community growth, or either may take place without growth. In some cases, growth may actually detract from development. For example, success of community development efforts may be measured by changes in political access, the

responsiveness of local government, or the satisfaction which residents receive from being able to influence change in their community (Libby, 1986). Such changes may make a community a more attractive place to live and work. Consequently this may very well contribute to community growth over time. The community concept and the associated idea of development as community capacity and economic vitality provide a framework for considering changes that have taken place in rural areas. Such a framework is also useful in considering the design of educational and development programs to assist rural communities. Community development is a process consisting of actions to improve community welfare. The process includes activities such as needs assessment, community analyses, concensus building, and goal setting as precursors to the design and implementation of action programs to address community needs. The process is dependent on capable, visionary local leaders and on informed and active citizens. Thus, education for all citizens may be the most critical ingredient to the success of rural community development programs.

A CHANGING RURAL AMERICA: IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

As a recent writer in The Wall Street Journal observed about rural Kansas, "Small towns on the plains no longer are, if they ever were, the kind of places depicted in Norman Rockwell covers" (Farney, 1989). The same point can be made about most other rural areas in the country. The much heralded "rural turn-around" of the 1960's and 1970's has ended. The decade of the 1980's has brought a dramatic reversal of the fortunes of rural America. Many rural areas were unable to retain jobs in traditional employment sectors and equally unable to attract new jobs in expanding, knowledge based manufacturing and service industries. Resulting declines in income and employment in agriculture, forestry, mining, and manufacturing had serious consequences for most, if not all, rural areas and segments of the rural economy (Drabenstott, et al., 1986; Henry et al., 1986).

The dimensions of change in rural communities across the country are obvious (eg: lost farms, closed businesses, unemployment and underemployment, eroding tax bases, and the inability of local governments to provide needed services). Unfortunately, immediate policy solutions are less obvious. Changes initially viewed as cyclical phenomena of importance only to communities dependent on agriculture are now perceived to be more fundamental in nature and part of a broader restructuring of the national economy (Beaulieu, 1988; Henry et al., 1988; Dillman, 1988; Dillman, et al., 1989). The increasing "internationalization" of economic activity has seriously eroded the competitive position of traditional rural industries (agriculture, manufacturing, and other natural resource based industries). Resulting employment declines are then further reinforced by shifts within the nation towards a technology-oriented, service-based economy. At the same time there is a continuing structural change within traditional agriculture. Moreover, the ability of rural areas to attract business and industry has been impacted by the deregulation of financial, transportation, and communications industries (Henry, et al., 1988).

Changes in the rural South differ from those in the nation only by a matter of degree. These distinctions are detailed in a recent study by the U. S. Department of Agriculture which classified all nonmetropolitan counties according to the primary source of income (Bender, et al., 1985), in two studies using similar data (Mulkey and Henry, 1988; Henry, 1987), in a series of reports from the Southern Growth Policies Board (Bergman and Johnson, 1986; Commission on the Future of the South, 1986; Rosenfeld, et al., 1986), and in papers by other authors (Billings, 1988; Rosenfeld, 1988; Swanson, 1988).

The South is more rural in character than are other regions. In addition, rural areas in the South are more dependent on manufacturing than are other areas. The South in general, and the rural South in particular,

trails the nation in per capita income (Mulkey and Henry, 1988), and levels of educational attainment. Likewise, work force skills do not favorably compare with those of other regions of the country (Swanson, 1988; Swanson and Butler, 1987; Beaulieu, 1989). As might be expected, poverty rates in the rural South exceed those of other areas. This includes the poverty rates of metropolitan areas in the South and other rural areas in the nation (U. S. Bureau of the Census).

Rural America is changing, and in fact, those changes threaten the capacity of many rural communities for collective action. These changes threaten the economic vitality of rural areas. Papers cited above and those of other authors (Deaton and McNamara, 1984; Hobbs, 1987; Ross and Rosenfeld, 1987; Rosenfeld, 1987; Hobbs, 1988; Deaton and Deaton, 1988; Nachtigal and Hobbs, 1988) remind us of the extent of rural change and the continuing nature of that change. Additionally, the studies cited stress the increasing importance of an educated and skilled workforce to the future development of rural areas. Undoubtedly, new development strategies are called for, and improvements in rural education are integral to the success of those strategies.

EDUCATION AND RURAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

Community/economic development is a process which focuses on the capacity of rural communities to engage in collective action over time. These activities may also result in the generation of income and employment for the community. The community educational system is an essential component of this process since schools both affect and are affected by the community of which they are a part (Mulkey, 1989a). First, an important component of community capacity is individual capability, and schools are in the process of expanding individual ability. Thus, a quality education for all students represents a major contribution to the community development process (Hobbs, 1988; Mulkey, 1989a). Further, learning does not take place in isolation (Mulkey, 1988; Hobbs, 1988; Deaton and Deaton, 1988). Students are a product of their community, and that community influences the educational process in the schools.

Again, schools are a part of the community development process. For those interested in rural community development, one dimension of rural education of immediate interest is the quality of current educational programs. The notion of education as an investment in human capital which yields both private and public (community) returns is not a new concept. This idea has been prominent in the economic literature since the publication of the seminal work by Schultz (1961). Community efforts (and dollars) devoted to school improvement represent such an investment. Students directly benefit from such investment through higher earnings. Communities benefit indirectly when improved schools make the community a more attractive place to live. When better educated individuals remain in the community, their increased productivity contributes to the development of the larger community.

Schools can also make explicit contributions to the development of rural communities. These contributions can extend beyond those arising from improvements in existing educational programs. Fortunately, many of the suggestions for rural school improvement also serve to increase the value of the school system to the community development process. Suggestions offered by Hobbs (1988), Hobbs and Nachtigal (1988), Mulkey (1988; 1989a), and Deaton and Deaton (1988) focus on increasing school/community interactions. These interactions directly contribute to the development of the community. Several of these suggestions are treated in more detail in sections that follow.

1. Schools should strive to deliver a quality education to all students. This point was made earlier and has been made elsewhere (Mulkey, 1989a; Hobbs, 1988), but it deserves repeating because of its overriding importance. From the community standpoint, inequality ue either to ethnic background, gender, or socioeconomic status is a major factor which

detracts from the creation of community in the sense of collective action (Wilkinson, 1988).

Inequality influences student performance with potential long run consequences for students and communities. We know that socioeconomic background is an important variable in explaining student performance. Students from wealthier and better educated families perform better in school than those from poorer circumstances (Hanushek, 1989). Evidence also suggests that school performance, especially as reflected in years of schooling completed, is rewarded with higher lifetime earnings (Jorgenson and Fraumeni, 1989). Have we then come full circle? Socioeconomic status influences school achievement which, in turn, influences socioeconomic status.

Questions of inequality in the rural South are further complicated by the correspondence between socioeconomic status and racial/ethnic background. An example can be found by examining poverty rates for the black population in the rural South. The rural South is home to most of the nation's rural (nonmetropolitan) black population. Recent census estimates place poverty rates among blacks in the nonmetropolitan South at over 40 percent. For nonmetropolitan black families with a female household head, the poverty rate is over 65 percent. For children in those same households, the poverty rate is almost 80 percent (U.S. Bureau of the Census).

Again, schools simply must come to grips with problems related to inequality. Poor children from poor families represent a significant portion of the human resource potential of the rural South.

2. Rural schools should expand their mission to include the broader educational needs of the community. This suggestion has been offered elsewhere in recognition of the broad range of educational needs which exist in many rural communities. Hobbs (1988) and Nachtigal and Hobbs (1988) stress the need to think of rural schools as learning resource centers while Deaton and Deaton (1988) stress the need to think of education as a lifelong learning process. In short, this suggestion calls for redefining the mission of schools in rural areas, for the development of new programs for new clientele groups. Examples may include literacy training, leadership development, nutrition and health training, child care programs, and a variety of adult education programs. (Mulkey, 1989a).

This mission is much broader than that of the traditional rural school with a concentration primarily on the delivery of formal classroom instruction to school age children (K-12). In addition, implementation is complicated by the need to reconsider school financing, both levels of funding and source of funds, and requirements of schools. Nevertheless, with these difficulties considered, the provision of this broader range of educational programs may offer a unique opportunity for rural schools to contribute to the development of rural communities.

3. Rural schools should teach people (students and community residents) about their community and how it works. Effective participation in the community development process requires the involvement of the community. Residents must be aware of the social, economic, and political realities facing their community. Hobbs (1987) forcefully reminds us of this point by noting, **"It strains credibility to assume that local development will travel far on ignorance the locality and how it works."**

Community groups must be interested in problems associated with the organization and delivery of public services. For example, these groups must understand the financial structure of local government. They must know the tax base and tax rates as well as the ways in which revenues are raised and spent. Additionally, community residents who wish to influence taxing and spending decisions must understand how local government functions. They must have the ability to develop and present alternative proposals to their elected officials.

Groups interested in economic development must understand the local economy. They need to become familiar with the products produced, inputs required, and the markets served by community businesses/industries. Such information is critical to understanding how the community relates to the economy of the larger state/nation. It is also becoming

increasingly important to understand international relationships and how they effect the local area.

The previous paragraphs offer only two examples of useful community knowledge. Other equally important educational needs are likely to exist in any particular community. Such needs offer unique opportunities for rural schools to provide useful service to rural communities. These types of community activities provide opportunities for students to relate academic work to real activities (experiential learning), as a process likely to enhance the quality of their educational experience (Hobbs, 1988).

4. Schools should focus on preparing rural residents to accept and use modern technology. We are now witnessing a virtual revolution in the development and application of communications and data processing technology -- a revolution with profound implications for rural communities and rural residents (Dillman, 1988; Dillman, et al., 1989; Hite and Henry, 1988). Dillman (1988) refers to this as the "information age". This new age demands the ability to receive, process, and transmit information. These skills are as important to the welfare of individuals and their rural communities as were railroads and highways in earlier years.

Dillman, et al. (1989) note the **"much heralded promise"** of technology to overcome the **"tyranny of rural space."** Thus, there is potential for rural areas to move closer to the mainstream of economic activity. However, in the same article Dillman and his co-authors note that the availability of technology provides no guarantee of success for rural communities. Referring to the promise of technology, they note:

That promise may go unfilled, however. The problem of creating rural jobs in today's information-based service economy is as much social and cultural as it is technological and economic. The physical barriers of distance can perhaps be overcome. But without a modernized telecommunications infrastructure, a technologically knowledgeable and sophisticated workforce, and a wider perspective of markets than just nearby communities, rural jobs and businesses will find little relief. Furthermore, the new technologies offer the opportunity to draw rural jobs to urban areas as well as draw urban jobs to rural areas.

A large part of the technological challenge facing rural communities is physical in nature. Modern telecommunications systems are necessary for full participation in the information age. Nevertheless, an equally important part of the technology challenge facing rural communities is building a sufficient human capital base to support applications of modern communications and data processing technology. The capacity of rural people to understand and apply the latest technology in their daily activities will be instrumental in deciding the fate of many rural communities. Note the last sentence of the quote above. Rural communities that lag in human capital skills may find that where modern infrastructure exists, it serves to reduce employment in the community.

Looking at the infrastructure side of the technology challenge, rural schools, or more appropriately administrators and teachers in those schools, can play a leadership role in policy debates at the state and federal level. Rural schools must address the other part of the challenge -- the skills of community residents. If, as suggested earlier, rural schools make efforts to become community learning resource centers, then an important component of that activity should focus on the use of telecommunications and computer technology.

5. Schools should focus on the development of leadership skills and entrepreneurial abilities. A critical component in the community development process outlined earlier is the existence of capable and visionary leaders at the local level. These leaders must possess the skills to seek innovative solutions to community problems. Rural areas are not homogenous, and studies such as the ones cited here can only serve to delineate the general dimensions of rural problems. Specific communities have specific problems. Each community has unique sets of resources with which to address those problems, and effective solutions are likely to

be specific to the locality. Rural schools must play a role in training community leaders and providing the information on which those solutions can be based.

Beyond leadership skills, there is increasing evidence of the importance of entrepreneurial abilities at the community level and at the individual/firm level. The idea is much the same as that expressed by Rosenfeld (1987) about vocational education. Individuals no longer need to be trained how to do a particular job. Rather, communities and businesses increasingly need individuals who are capable of learning and relearning how to do a variety of things. Group learning activities in the community which focus skill development on the analysis of community problems could well be one step in developing both entrepreneurial and leadership abilities.

6. Schools should provide leadership in programs designed to increase public awareness of community educational needs and the importance of education to individual and community development. It is clear from evidence cited here and elsewhere that quality education is important to communities and critical to the success of individuals. Yet, this evidence is not often translated into community support for educational improvement efforts. Community residents need information on the extent of educational needs/problems. Likewise they need alternative policies/programs for addressing those problems, and information on the consequences of alternative courses of actions.

Educational improvement programs must go beyond the school and rely on family and community involvement (Mulkey, 1988; Beaulieu, 1989). The importance of this family and community support is to important to be left to chance. Schools must play an active role in providing a forum for discussion of school/community issues. They must play a role in ensuring that policy debates are based on accurate and complete information.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

In summary, rural community development is a process of developing the capacity of rural residents. Then equipped with the necessary skills they can begin to identify common interests and to act on behalf of those interests. Rural schools are an essential part of that process. Improving the quality of existing educational programs can contribute directly and indirectly to the community development process. However, by expanding the rural school mission to encompass the broader educational needs of the community and by providing an explicit community focus to educational programs, schools can further contribute to the development of rural communities. The result could well be both better schools and better communities.

Suggestions offered here, however, will not always be easy to accomplish. An expanded mission for schools has policy implications at the district, state, and federal level. There are implications for the way in which schools are funded and for the types of educational programs offered. At the same time the audience for those programs, and the relationships between schools and communities must be examined. Nonetheless, policymakers must not allow these difficulties to detract from the fundamental role that schools must play in contributing to the success of community development programs.

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INTEGRATING THE LOCAL COMMUNITY INTO RURAL SCHOOL CURRICULUM

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Significant changes must occur in the way we view the role of schools in rural America if they are to play a larger role in the overall development of rural communities. Necessary changes will affect every aspect of education, however an area which will require major reform lies within the realm of the curriculum offered in rural schools. At the Appalachian Center, University of Kentucky, academic research focuses on economic development, health care and the problems of social services in Appalachia. Center activities also focus on education in the region. Such activities include working with teachers, administrators, and citizens concerned with improving the quality of education in the mountains. The research has shown that one cannot isolate education from economic development, health care, social services or other public concerns of rural communities. They are all interrelated and collectively help to constitute the distinctive nature of rural community life. Within this context, the school curriculum provides the common fabric which links specific content with overall goals and the school itself to the larger society. Examining the school curriculum raises fundamental questions about education in our communities and its role in linking students to the communities in which they live.

The curriculum which has developed in American public schools over the last century has become increasingly more complex, more technical and more standardized. The modern curriculum with its standardized readers and course guides is designed to prepare students to live and work anywhere in the nation -- to live in a highly mobile, ever-changing, high-tech society of the future. Unfortunately, this nationalized, modernized and urbanized curriculum has often worked to the comparative disadvantage of the local rural community. The education that rural children receive is often not culturally relevant to their needs. If we accept the idea that rural communities differ significantly in economy, society, and value orientations from urban areas, then the curriculum must reflect such variation. A standardized curriculum also focuses student attention and values away from the local community. Thus contributing to the further decline of the rural community through outmigration of its youth.

It has always been recognized that schools play a major role in sustaining a democratic community. However, a series of recent studies suggest that our schools are essentially failing at that endeavor. The current concern about the revitalization of community, or of "a sense of community" in America, has raised serious questions about whether our schools foster community or whether, in fact, they serve as a barrier to community. One of the things we know about economic development, for example, is that such development will not take place unless there is a certain energy, a certain commitment, a certain sense of community in the area seeking development. It is almost a pre-requisite that people are connected and "buy-in" to making a difference in their community. Without that commitment there is very little structural aid that can be provided by government that will revive or save a community.

How do we revitalize community? A book by Robert Bellah and his associates, Habits of

the Heart, provides an example. This book reports the results of a study conducted by a group of California sociologists concernirg the American character over the past 100 years. This study reaches startling conclusions about the direction in which American society is headed. In fact, Bellah and his colleagues suggest that American culture today faces a crisis from the loss of a sense of commitment and public cooperation resulting from what they have characterized as rising individualism. Such individualism has shaped our modern life. Americans have, they argue, lost the ability to cooperate, to work together, to be committed to some of the basic values that hold a democracy together.

To condense their argument, Bellah suggests that we, as Americans, have spoken two languages throughout our history. One is a language of individualism -- priding individual success and skill. This language of individualism has helped us develop a strong entrepreneurial society. It has frequently been the basis for our civil liberties and the protection of individual rights. The language of individualism, however, separates individuals from society, tending to emphasize individual rights and responsibilities rather than collective responsibilities.

Americans also speak a second, more public language arising from our Biblical tradition or our republican tradition. It is a communal language that binds us together in community. This language commits individuals to responsibilities to each other. As Bellah suggests, it is a public language upon which democracy must feed in order to survive. Over the last 100 years, these sociologists argue, Americans have to a great degree lost the ability to engage in public talk. The public language has been lost and replaced by a growing emphasis on individuals and individualism. Increasingly, individuals have lost a sense of responsibility to community, have withdrawn from common commitments, and have left collective decisions up to special interest groups and private interest politics.

Which of these languages do schools teach today? Do they teach competition, professionalism, centralization, conformity, and personal success -- the language of individualism? Or, do they teach cooperation, commitment, participation, civic virtue -- the idea of public good?

Those who live in rural communities still work together, both out of necessity and custom. Getting tobacco up in the fall is a family responsibility as is the planting process in the spring. Seldom does one see an individual working under the hood of a car in a rural area. Working on cars is often a collective effort, along with other daily activities such as gardening, hunting, and quilting. There is a strong idea, a value, of cooperation and mutual support that pervades working class culture and has survived in rural America. The first priority is the survival of the family as opposed to personal success.

School, however, teaches a more private language. It emphasizes individual competition and individual achievement rather than cooperation for the survival of the group. Cooperation in many classrooms is often confused with "cheating." Likewise, students are often grouped into artificial categories of class and intellectual ability that do not reflect the diversity of the real community.

Beyond teaching "a sense of community," schools make further contributions to community development. Community revitalization, or rural economic development is not going to be generated outside of the community. Economic development strategies must be focused by leadership and commitment from with the community. Before a community can effectively confront problems of economic development, health care, social services, environmental damage, and other concerns, it must develop a strong sense of community, a sense of commitment to the common good.

What is the role of education? Community development efforts that do not address the human dimension of building successful community are doomed to failure. Building community involves both adult learning and continuing education as well as aggressive programs in the elementary and secondary schools. Such efforts require that the national curriculum be supplemented with regional and community based education materials. This idea is not to eliminate, but to supplement and

integrate local and regional content into the national, standardized curriculum.

A community, according to Bellah, should inform efforts at circular change. He argues that communities have a history, and that in a very important sense, communities are constituted by their past. A real community is a community of memory. In order not to forget the past, the community must be continually involved in re-telling its distinct story. In so doing, it offers examples of the men and women who have embodied and exemplified the meaning of community over time. It is this process of re-telling the community story again and again that helps to build the collective memory. Such "memory" links individuals to the group and sustains commitment to the community. The collective memory helps to create a shared understanding of where the community has been, and it creates a sense of pride and connectedness that can provide a foundation or direction for the future.

Martin Luther King and other black leaders of the 1960s understood the importance of collective memory. Before black Americans could effectively take the initiative and confront the racial problems of the larger society, they had to understand their collective past -- the past that connected young people to older people and black Americans to the national heritage. Such knowledge of the collective memory was a prerequisite for change.

Modern society has suffered a significant loss of collective memory. Southerners were once believed to be different from other Americans because they had a greater understanding of the past, a greater sense of place. At one time Southerners did in fact possess this trait. Most rural people tend to know their past much better than urban residents. However, as modernization has occurred even many in the South have given up that sense of connectedness to place. It is more difficult for individuals in modern society to re-acquire a sense of shared and collective memory. Which helps to create a sense of place. Significantly, it is our sense of place that connects individuals to others and thus allows them to appreciate the relationship between the individual and the common good.

A second advantage of localizing and regionalizing the school curriculum is related to the important role of education in helping to teach what it means to be a member of a democratic community. Education is essential for a democratic community. Especially in rural areas, citizens must be trained in what it means to live in a democratic society, not just how to get a job there or how to leave it. The whole idea of civics has been eliminated from the curriculum. It is as if students are supposed to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to live in a democracy in their biological genes. To live in a democracy is a participatory experience that requires certain relationships, values, and responsibilities. Each generation must re-discover this experience, and unless each community constantly re-engages in that process, then democracy itself is in jeopardy.

In discussing of the decline of commitment in American life, Bellah describes just how far we have come from the republican traditions of the founding generation. It was this tradition which sustained local communities throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and for which we have almost totally lost understanding and appreciation in today's society. One component of the republican tradition, for example, is the idea of commonwealth. Why was this term so important to the founding generation? What does it mean today? WHy have we lost its shared meaning as part of our political culture? The word commonwealth simply implies that the purpose of government is to look out after the common well-being of all citizens, a collective, community-based notion that puts the public good above private interest.

The idea of civic virtue is another of those lost republican ideas. The concept that sometimes one must put public virtue above private virtue -- the community's interest above personal gain -- has been lost in the broker-state politics of the twentieth century. So has the notion of independence. Our ancestors believed that in a democracy voters ought to be independent of any particular allegiance to any special interest group, but over the past 100 years we have replaced this independence with a series of economic, lifestyle, religious,

professional or other alliances. Today everyone belongs to a special interest group and votes according to the priorities of those interest groups. This was not part of the ideological tradition held by the founding generation. These leaders believed that to live in a democracy required participation in the community and in the activities of that community by all freeholders. We not only have one of the lowest voter turnouts of any democracy in the world but also are reluctant to participate in public activities altogether. We have come to believe that some special interest group will take care of all of our collective problems.

Bellah and his associates suggest that Americans have lost the ability to understand what it means to be a community. Many do not know what the values are upon which our society stands, and which must be renewed if we are to survive. Instead of commonwealth, civic virtue, independence and citizenship, the republican tradition has been replaced with a brokered state that emphasizes private interest rather than the common good, competition rather than civic cooperation, and special interest group politics rather than the politics of the public good.

Educating for community requires the development of the capacity for cooperation: the ability to link private interest with the public good, the ability to engage in public talk, and the ability to move from self-centered opinion to civic judgment. These are all skills that children can learn through creative teaching and curriculum reform which integrates the local into the national, the specific community into the universal experience. In this context students learn about their local economic, social, cultural, and political world. At the same time, they are acquiring skills of research, communication, analysis, conflict resolution (i.e. racism, sexism, age discrimination), fairness and justice, and other values that are central to our society.

There are two other areas that are important to the revitalization of a sense of community. In addition to collective memory and an educational process which helps re-educate people about what it means to live in a democratic community, a third requirement is leadership development.

Locally-based curriculum helps to provide students with a better understanding of local leadership. Many students get out into their community as part of community-based learning projects. They talk to their local leaders. They understand who their local leaders are. It not only helps students to understand the nature of local leadership, but it also helps to emphasize the idea of civic responsibility among those adult leaders themselves.

One of the interesting things I have seen happen in eastern Kentucky in recent years, for example, has been the introduction of a local television station and how it has improved the quality of elected officials. After the local television station was launched, the local leaders began doing their homework on public issues because they were now accountable on a daily basis. The same thing happens when you get a group of students out doing a community-based project. Recently, a group of second graders in Harlan County, Kentucky developed a project about the problem of trash in their local creeks. These students produced a video on the problem of waste disposal in their county which had an impact on the county political leadership, and, as a result, a group was formed in the county to examine the trash problem.

Community-based curriculum also builds a better informed and better trained future leadership for the community in the long run. Community development is a process, not a thing that can be purchased. It takes a long time. Part of the problem in living in modern society is that solutions are expected immediately. This is especially true of politicians who must face periodic re-election and who find long term thinking difficult. Consequently, community development must extend beyond the political leadership of a community. Community development is a long-range process and community-based curricular programs help to build that leadership in the next generation. Such leadership would not only understand the community better, but it would also share a broader commitment to the common good and to addressing collective problems. This leads to the last component of

community development which the integration of the local community into the school curriculum can foster -- a greater sense of the potential of the community, a greater sense of vision.

Community-based programs in schools help to create positive feelings about the communities in which students live. Parents are amazed that their children are actually coming and talking about grandparents, family and community events. Students are making connections between generations and understanding the roots of social and economic problems. Community-based programs help to create positive feelings about rural and poor communities that frequently receive only negative coverage in the media. In the building of positive feeling about community, these programs also help to build a collective vision of what the community can become in the future.

Once students begin to think about their community in positive ways, they can begin to build an alternative vision for the future. Communities without a vision for the future are communities that are likely to die. Therefore, for communities to continue to develop vision is critical. Today and in the future, rural communities need leaders who are willing to step out and become visionaries.

Finally, integrating the local community into the curriculum actually helps to assist students in acquiring an understanding of the larger world and how they will relate to the global community. The local community provides a foundation from which to understand modern society, high technology, and the global economy. Rural communities do not have to be provincial. As one of our great Southern writers, Eudora Welty, once said, "One place understood helps us to understand other places better. Sense of place gives equilibrium; extended, it is sense of direction."

Curriculum development with a local focus requires leadership in the schools -- at the district level, at the school level, and within the classroom itself. Teachers must be given the time to do the additional work that is required to localize the curriculum, and administrators must be willing to be flexible and supportive. Such work has many rewards, rewards that extend far beyond the classroom since teachers are no longer engaged in training individuals to leave the community but in educating them for community. Therein lies the critical reform role that schools can play in the revitalization of our common life.

SCHOOL BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: MAKING CONNECTIONS FOR IMPROVED LEARNING

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The 1980s have taken much of the wind out of the sails of a rural renaissance that was being widely reported and discussed as the 1980s began. After the decade of 1970s, with the rural population turnaround and new sources of rural income and employment, the 1980s have generally produced greater concentration of income, employment and population in metropolitan areas. Although there are some exceptions (such as non-metro counties adjacent to growing metro areas), rural areas generally have achieved a shrinking proportion of national income and employment during the 1980s. Rural development, now more often being termed rural revitalization, has emerged as a great need. When the need for rural development is linked with growing concerns for environment, it is possible that the spatial distribution of population and economic activity may become a more prominent national and local policy consideration in the 1990s.

Public Education As A Problem Area

Concurrently a perception of crisis pervades American public education. The Nation at Risk, in both title and substance, appears to have captured many of the sources of concern. In part the perception of crisis appears to have been prompted by comparison of U.S. economic and education performance with other industrial nations - a reversal in balance of trade, diminishing growth in labor force productivity relative to major economic competitors, and the realization that the students of other nations were outperforming those in the U.S. The perception has been reinforced by the recent failure of student test scores to improve, despite substantial increases in funding, while student drop-out rates remain unacceptably high in many parts of the country.

Broad-based perception of crisis has energized extensive educational reform efforts. The past seven years have been busy times for schools and the state apparatus largely responsible for the funding and regulation of schools. As observed by Timar and Kirp:

> Since 1983 the states have generated more rules and regulations about all aspects of education than in the previous 20 years. Nationwide, more than 700 state statutes affecting some aspect of the teaching profession were enacted between 1984 and 1986. (1989:506)

While it may take more time for such reforms to produce an effect, there has been little evidence of improvement yet, at least by the measures being employed. There are several possible reasons:

(1) Inappropriate and ineffective measures are being used to evaluate student and school performance. Little more needs to be added about the questionable validity and utility of standardized tests. Yet those tests remain the basis for an annual ritual press conference held by the U.S. Secretary of Education to announce that no improvement in test scores has occurred.

(2) Since there has been no radical change in public education in recent years, one must

also seek outside education for explanations. Educational performance is influenced more by socio-economic and other characteristics of students than by what occurs within the school. The evidence is very clear and powerful that this is the case. Accumulated research is consistent in identifying student socio-economic status (especially when aggregated for a school, community or region) as the most powerful predictor of student performance (cf Walberg and Fowler 1987). From the early 1970s the percentage of the nation's children living below the poverty line has continued to increase while standardized test scores have continued to decline. Research strongly supports that this is not a coincidence. This relationship is especially critical for rural areas which include a disproportionately large proportion of the nation's poor and economically marginal (Lichter and Costanzo (1987).

(3) Closely related to the research on socio-economic status of students is what appears to be the emergence of a two-tiered education system, paralleling the emergence of a two-tiered economy (Falk and Lyson 1988; Reich 1989). Average educational performance is not improving, although the standard deviations are becoming greater; that is, the top half of students is doing better and the bottom half is doing worse. Indeed the term "students (youth) at risk" has been popularized the past couple of years, probably tracing it's heritage to the Nation at Risk.

Carnoy and Levin (1986) emphasize that public education has historically been charged with conflicting expectations - on the one hand to reproduce the existing class structure (the economic purpose) while simultaneously teaching and emphasizing equality (the social purpose). They suggest that recent educational reforms have been undertaken because of perception of economic crisis and consequently the reforms have been more oriented toward the economic purpose (meritocracy) and less to the equality purpose. Thus the gap between the educational "haves" and "have-nots" has been widening concurrent with the widening economic gap between "have" and "have-not" families.

(4) The reforms, while great in number, really produce little to improve the motivation and opportunity for learning for many students. The reforms have been what Cuban (1989) refers to as "first-order" changes (i.e. "...changes that try to make what already exists more efficient and more effective, without disturbing the basic organizational features..." p.342). Cuban contends, along with many others, that what is needed is restructuring of education more than reform. Restructuring to Cuban involves second-order change:

> Second-order changes seek to alter the fundamental ways in which organizations are put together. They reflect major dissatisfactions with present arrangements. Second-order changes introduce new goals, structure, and roles that transform familiar ways of doing things into new ways of solving persistent problems (1989:342).

Second-order (restructuring) changes are needed. This paper will explore these changes such as the potential for closer connections between the schools and community throughout this paper.

DEPENDENT RURAL COMMUNITIES AND THEIR STRUGGLES

Many rural communities today find themselves caught up in a struggle between what are often opposing and contradictory forces. On the one hand are the efforts of mostly local interests striving to retain or revitalize their community and the "sense of community" that ideally is associated with it (Peshkin 1982). Their efforts range from community development to local industrial development. For the most part the advocates and supporters of community retention and revitalization are waging their effort alone, except for a modicum of support from extension services of land grant universities, a few scattered state and federal programs and a few relatively uncoordinated interest groups.

On the other hand are the national and international forces of economic change whose impact is as great or greater on smaller rural communities than on the cities and metropolitan areas. Most of the major components of rural community's economic base, e.g. farming, mining and other natural resource based industries, factories recently relocated from urban areas, and such other factors as recreation, tourism, retirement, etc. are directly linked with national and global markets and management structures. Rural communities may be isolated but their principal economic activities aren't.

To a great extent today's rural communities are dependent for their essential economic base on market forces and management decisions over which they have little control. These external factors, whether markets or management, determine whether miners, loggers and oil field workers have work, whether farm prices are high or low, what wage rates are at rural factories and even whether the factory remains in the community or re-locates. While these effects are operative throughout the nation, rural communities are generally more vulnerable because most are principally dependent on one major employer or sector for their economic base; in effect, most of their economic eggs are in one basket. They do not have the added protection of a diversified economy which characterizes metropolitan areas.

Furthermore rural communities are more economically vulnerable because they are small and therefore have relatively little political and therefore economic power. Recent historical evidence makes it clear that federal and state governments are quick to respond to the troubles and possible demise of large employers, e.g. bail-outs of banks, corporations, etc. There has been less political interest in "interfering" with "market" forces which result in the re-location of rural factories and branch plants which for many rural communities are the basis for their survival. Indeed as Falk and Lyson (1988), among many others, point out there is an absence of any industrial policy for the nation which could provide some added degree of protection and stability for many regions and localities of rural America.

The de facto industrial policy has largely been to assume or encourage re-location of workers (especially more highly trained) from areas of low employment and low wages to areas of greater and higher wage employment. The implications for rural regions and communities have been quite significant. Not only have many rural areas lost population, but they have also exported an important part of their investment in the education of their youth. An important consequence has been the emergence and retention of what, for 25 years, has been labeled the "people left behind". That was the title chosen for the 1960s Presidential Commission report on rural poverty. The rural poor were characterized as those lacking the skills and the resources to relocate to areas of higher wages and employment. Data continue to confirm a deficit in educational attainment of the remaining rural population and a rural poverty rate 50 percent above the national rate. Indeed ten percent of non-metropolitan counties have been designated as "persistent poverty" counties since they have ranked in the lower 20 percent in income among counties since 1950.

RURAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND RURAL RESTRUCTURING

So, lacking a coherent industrial policy and little effective state and national level rural development emphasis and support, rural communities are today largely confronted with "going it alone", relying on what Reid (1990) refers to as a self-development strategy. Such a strategy is inspiring more rural communities to seek resources where they can find them. A few rural communities have begun to carefully build a closer connection with their local school, beginning to realize that students involved in the "real" work of the community can not only learn how to learn, but simultaneously add pertinent resources to the community efforts (Nachtigal and Hobbs 1988).

Indeed involving students in studying their community and in community development work can also be a first major step in school restructuring. The first and most obvious implication is that it is a step back from standardization, a cardinal principle of schooling in recent decades. It also forces redefinition of the learning environment, what are learning resources, who are teachers, and the methods for evaluation of learning. It places an emphasis on the student as an active learner rather than a passive "empty" vessel. These are potential second-order changes in the concept of schooling and second-order changes are always threatening to some, especially those whose status has been gained via the principles of the system as it is.

Although Nachtigal (1982) argues that public schools should provide leadership and training in economic development that is appropriate to the strengths of the local economy, critics contend that would restrict students to their locality, reduce their mobility, limit their perspective. Marshall (1986) and Tucker (1986) however are among those who argue that learning how to learn through active participation is a transferable skill and should become a central feature of restructured education. A small town South Dakota teacher makes the same point in somewhat different language:

> We have to guard against that (a narrow local perspective), to see what we're doing here as a foundation for broader learning. More than ever before it's important to study other cultures. But how do you study other cultures if you don't understand your own? (Higbee 1990).

Another teacher at the same school stresses that not everyone should stay in rural America:

> But that is one option. And really the rest of the world is small communities too, whether they are other rural towns or urban neighborhoods. Learning to function in a community doesn't change too much from environment to environment (Higbee 1990).

In addition to the orientation of the curriculum there are some other constraints to a more locality oriented curriculum and educational program. These include state mandated curricula and credits, the lack of training and preparation on the part of teachers and administrators, already overburdened teaching faculty in many smaller rural schools, a lack of relevant instructional materials, the structure of schooling including its allocation of time, etc. All these constraints are a part of schooling as it is generally known.

It is possible within the constraints of the existing model of the school to provide more opportunities for experiential learning, to expand the learning environment of the school, to increase the relevancy of instruction. Indeed there are numerous schools that are doing just that. Nevertheless, from the experience of a South Dakota school that has made a strong commitment to becoming a "school without walls", restructuring soon becomes inevitable. As stated by the High School Principal:

> To survive rural communities have to become one extended family, one interactive, collaborative system. I'm talking about severe restructuring not only in schools, but in community functioning (Higbee 1990).

RESTRUCTURING OF THE RURAL SCHOOL: TOWARD AN ALTERNATIVE PARADIGM(S)

What might restructuring mean, in contrast to the more familiar ideas associated with reform? Tucker (1986) states emphatically that restructuring is essential; Cuban (1989) emphasizes that second-order (fundamental) changes are needed. Our society has a model of schooling, it is the paradigm of public education in the U.S. It is a paradigm predicated on efficiency and standardization and there has been a broad consensus supporting the "one-best system" of public education (Tyack 1975). When a consensually validated system is perceived to be in a state of crisis however, it allows for second order

changes. Second-order changes bear a resemblance to what Thomas Kuhn (1962), in his classic work on the basis for scientific revolution, referred to as paradigm change. Kuhn observed that our paradigms condition how we see the world and therefore as our paradigms change, the world changes.

Second-order changes require experimentation. Our society has a highly rationalized model of schooling; we do not have clear and well-defined principles for an alternative paradigm that might be predicated on a broader concept of education rather than the extant narrower, corporate paradigm of schooling. No alternative set of principles is likely to leap forward and gain broad consensus support during the next few years. We can expect rather that the 1990s will be a period of substantial experimentation in public education as restructuring gains greater currency and reform less.

Our thought is that rural schools might well be in the fore-front of important educational experimentation in coming years. Rural schools will likely confront more serious problems in adhering to the dictates of the dominant paradigm, e.g. finance, staff, curriculum, etc. The economic status of rural communities will affect the ability of many communities to support the highly professionalized comprehensive school of the dominant paradigm. Rural schools also have an experimental advantage because they are small, therefore potentially more flexible and less hierarchical. Likewise, the rural community environment can be more accessible to educational experiences outside the school and therefore will facilitate experiments that involve closer connections between education and environment and linking academic concepts with application.

Rural schools will more likely respond to their experimental advantages if experimentation is encouraged rather than discouraged by state educational agencies and policy makers. That however seems to be occurring. The National Governor's Association in their rural agenda setting report - New Alliances for Rural America - specifically called for greater experimentation and greater adaptation of school curricula and programs to local circumstances. Several states, including Washington's program of Schools for the 21st Century, are actively encouraging experimentation oriented toward evolving new principles (Nachtigal and Hobbs 1988).

SOME PRINCIPLES FOR EXPERIMENTATION

Experimentation is more likely to be productive of substantive changes if it is guided by some principles. While I do not presume to specify what those principles are, or should be, Diagram 1 (Hobbs 1989) includes a set of features contrasting the dominant, mass-society and industrially based paradigm of the school with a learning environment that might be more appropriate to the needs of students, communities and the nation now and in coming years. More succinctly, these features differentiate a model of schooling and a model of education. That distinction is hardly new; Illich authored a classic book more than 20 years ago calling for "de-schooling" of society. Most of the characteristics identified with "education" are derived simply by taking an inverse of many traits and characteristics of schooling. This is not to suggest that these are new or dramatic, many are being followed in some schools today (Nachtigal and Hobbs 1988). The characteristics listed under education are, for the most part, descriptors of the focus and methods of some rural schools experiments with experientially based education occurring in the community environment outside the school.

The diagram suggests that an alternative learning environment would be expanded beyond the school, have less structure, would be integrated with the environment outside the school and would expand rather than limit educational resources. It suggests also administration more oriented to leadership and effectiveness than to management and efficiency. Instruction might more often involve organizing meaningful learning experiences rather than limited exclusively to classroom teaching. The instruction might also

DIAGRAM 1. The Mass Society School/Learning Environment of An Information Age

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	SCHOOLING	EDUCATION
Space	Confined	Expanded
Structure	High	Low
Scope	Isolated	Integrated
Resources	Exclusive	Inclusive
ADMINISTRATION		
Emphasis	Standardization	Uniqueness
Evaluation	Efficiency	Effectiveness
Role	Management	Leadership
INSTRUCTION		
Method	Teaching	Organization
Unit	Classes	Individuals/Groups
Style	Prescriptive	Participatory
Outcomes	Exposure	Mastery
SUBJECT MATTER		
Evaluation	Facts, Skills	Understanding
Units	Fragmentary	Holistic
Outcomes	Constrains	Empowers
LEARNERS		
Role	Passive	Active
Goal	Completion	Continuous
Rewards	Artificial	Intrinsic
COMMUNITY/SOCIETY		
Expectations	Reproduction	Change

be more oriented toward active student participation with mastery as the objective. Evaluation could focus more on holistic understanding rather than fragmentary facts. The focus of learners could also be more oriented toward active, continuing education. The existing model of the school emphasizes completion, something that is finished. The outcomes of learning might be perceived more as personal empowerment and laying a foundation for social change. There is a presumption, although not fully tested, that the features listed under education might improve the motivation and interest in learning of those students who are now often termed "at-risk"; that it is those students who might be empowered. It is essential that restructuring be substantially oriented toward those students who are not being served as well by schooling because indeed it is their performance, and the reasons for it, that is contributing much to the perception of education crisis. Higbee (1990) in his interviews with students, teachers, school officials and townspeople in three South Dakota rural communities reports that: "... people in all three communities stressed that school restructuring should first take into account not 'the best and the brightest', but the needs of youth with problems. Governor Mickelson echoed that sentiment, telling me, 'The top priority in South Dakota is at-risk youth'.." (1990:4).

ANOTHER RATIONALE FOR SCHOOL-BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT EXPERIMENTATION

Another rationale for educational restructuring, specifically expanding the educational environment and offering the student more experiential based education is contributed by Costello (1980) with some elaborations by Wynn and associates (1988). Costello suggests that there are four capacities that adults need and adolescents must acquire: (1) physical vitality; (2) ability to sustain caring relationships; (3) resourcefulness and, (4) a sense of social connectedness. Wynn, et. al. suggest that components of resourcefulness include possession of practical knowledge and skills, the ability to seek and sift information, to learn new things, and to apply knowledge and skills in effective action. Social connectedness is the sense individuals have of affiliation with a social community that validates their identity, provides supports and services and requires contribution in turn. In enhancing the individuals' sense of identity and providing support, communities get the benefit of individuals' sense of connection with the community, that is, assurance that community members will "respect and contribute to interests that transcend (their) own; that (they) will sacrifice self-interest to public interests in order to accomplish social goals" (Costello 1980:25).

Neither Costello nor Wynn, et. al. direct their analysis specifically or exclusively toward schools, but they do question where and/or how adolescents are acquiring these competencies in the face of diminished community relationships and changed roles of families. In their place have emerged a specialized set of bureaucracies, including the school. Wynn et. al. suggest that attempting to meet human service needs through highly specialized and uncoordinated bureaucracies is frustrating acquisition of those competencies. They observe that:

> People diagnosed with any one of a set of problems--inadequate income mental illness, juvenile delinquency, educational failure--are treated by distinction and uncoordinated bureaucracies. The particular bureaucracy with which individuals have the first contact is the one to prescribe treatment, often in ways that do not address individuals as complete people, but, instead, attend only to particular needs that are predefined and circumscribed.
> (1988:4).

In the rural environment these problems may be compounded by the service providers being located far from the community in addition to their bureaucratic fragmentation. In many rural communities the school is not only the most visible, but often the only structured service provider - a logical

organization base therefore for the acquisition of the necessary competencies. Indeed the need for that connectedness was referred to by the South Dakota rural high school principal quoted above.

If we acknowledge the need for restructuring of schooling and effective self-development strategies for rural communities, it becomes somewhat more clear that expanding the educational environment to include community "work" and analysis for students can contribute to an acquisition of more of the competencies specified by Costello than are ordinarily facilitated by the conventional paradigm of the school.

If it is believed that education and community development can be effectively intertwined and can take acquisition of those competencies as their common agenda, there then could be a basis for beginning to revitalize communities and restructure education in ways that could be mutually beneficial to today's student and tomorrow's citizen. The following is a brief elaboration of each of these competencies.

The Capacity for Physical Vitality

Although physical vitality is not as germane to the focus of this paper as the other three competencies, it nevertheless provides a focus for an observation concerning both social trends and schooling. Aided and abetted by the evolution and growth in prominence of television, the nation, including especially children and youth, have refined their propensities to be members of an audience. Recent studies and news reports have emphasized the profound socialization influence of television watching on children. Indeed regulation of television watching in the home has recently emerged as a characteristic of what Walberg refers to as the "alterable curriculum of the home" - a factor having a prominent influence on student performance (1984).

Although schools are a (the) principal source of physical education and organized physical activity for children and youth the process of schooling greatly reinforces the role of audience member, especially for those students who are not among the athletic elite. Perhaps in a day when a student's life outside school was necessarily physically active, i.e. the rural farm children and youth who were depended on as workers, that was an important socializing influence. Passiveness, more than activity, is likely to be a way of life for today's student. A greater emphasis on active learning, even if not physically demanding, can be a step in the direction of greater connectedness between physical activity and social and mental work and competencies.

Related is the known connection between various measures of physical vitality and school performance. Otto (1975) is among several researchers who have found a direct positive relationship between student participation in extra-curricular activities and their academic performance. There is also a clear and direct connection between family income and health status (Clarke and Miller 1990). Thus insofar as students at risk are an essential focus of school restructuring, it appears likely that they reflect a convergence of risk-factors, e.g. lower family income, less physical activity (extra-curricular participation), increased probability of poorer health and reduced physical vitality combining to contribute to poorer academic performance. The physical vitality of at-risk students may be a neglected need.

A need for greater physical vitality does not end with today's elementary and secondary students. Adults also have that need and in most rural communities the school is the location of by far the best facilities. A closer connection between school and community can be achieved with just the simple step of opening the school facilities to community use. The potential for greater intergenerational activities could also contribute to establishing more affective caring relationships and a greater sense of social connectedness.

The Ability to Sustain Caring Relationships

In a time in which young people had only the role model of the intact nuclear family on which to base their adult life, not much consideration was given to helping young persons acquire an ability to sustain caring

relationships. Even more importantly extended families were the norm in many rural localities until the past generation. Young people grew up with substantial direct interaction with older persons.

In today's smaller rural communities age segregation has become the norm. Rural communities are likely to have a higher concentration of older people than urban communities and various federal and state programs for older and retired persons have contributed to establishing and reinforcing age segregation, e.g. meals programs, senior citizen centers, older American transportation services, publicly supported housing, etc. Conversely schools are the focus of youth activities and there are teen centers, youth organizations, etc. In between are nuclear families with both mother and father usually employed outside the home, very often working in other towns and fully occupied with making a living. Concomitantly there has been a dramatic increase in the number of single-parent households. Estimates are that as many as 25 percent of today's children and youth are growing up in single parent households. In addition today's rural communities are no longer the sole focus of their resident's work, shopping, entertainment, etc. All these trends and more affect the family and other caring relationships adolescents are involved in.

About three years ago a rural mental health specialist spent some time doing informal interviews in a South Dakota town of about 5,000 and came away with the realization there was substantial antagonism between youth and older people in the community. He determined there was little contact between young and old, but that had not prevented images from being formed on both sides of the age spectrum. The youth perceived older people as intolerant and only concerned about themselves; older people perceived youth as being irresponsible trouble-makers engaged in vandalism and all kinds of delinquent behavior. This is the community from which several quotes were extracted above, including the high school principal. The school has aggressively developed a wide range of activities to extend the educational environment out into the community. One of those activities is a class in historiography - history students learning history by constructing it. One of their most prominent sources has been interviews with older persons in the community. While it is not possible to quantify, anecdotal evidence from the teachers indicates a much greater appreciation of old for young and vice versa as a result of those interactions.

Disintegration of family, where it has occurred, may be an important contributing factor to the growth in number of at-risk students. The consequences include reduced self-esteem which contributes to a willingness to enter into and to sustain caring relationships. Educational experiences outside the classroom which place adolescents in a position of helping to do important community work and/or providing care as a learning experience can contribute to an acquisition of this competency.

Indeed in several South Dakota communities students have become involved in designing and carrying out community needs assessment surveys. Again anecdotal evidence emphasizes a new and affective appreciation of the community on the part of participating students. As one teacher emphasized about such surveys: "We believe in ownership. Students who help plan, own the results." (Higbee 1990:26)

Resourcefulness

It is this competency that has traditionally been the domain of schools. Resourcefulness however goes beyond the mere acquisition of knowledge; it implies utility and application. As defined by Wynn et. al. resourcefulness includes helping students acquire an ability to seek information and evaluate its usefulness, and in helping students bring their knowledge and skills together into effective action. Resourcefulness means being able to recognize a problem and know what knowledge or information might be pertinent to it's solution. Schooling has tended to separate the acquisition of knowledge from it's application in the world outside and the methods and procedures most used to assess learning (i.e. standardized tests) tend to reinforce that

separation. Acquiring resourcefulness implies practice in connecting ideas with application, an important rationale for experiential learning and expanding the learning environment.

PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

A curricular dichotomy of diminishing utility has emerged in American public education - the division between academic and vocational tracks. Tucker (1986) stresses that high school vocational education as a separate track is counterproductive: vocationally oriented students need a stronger academic foundation to master emerging vocational skills and academically oriented students need, "...an education designed to provide a constant interplay between theory and application, between head and hand, between ideas and the world of action." (1986:37).

The recent experiences of some schools experimenting with making these connections shows the possibilities are endless. A South Dakota school instituted a high school level research and development class - to research their community and develop ideas for its improvement. Their "laboratory" extended 20 miles each direction outside the school and beyond. Relevant subject matter included economics, sociology, history, english, geography, etc. They produce reports of potential use to the community. Their reports are graded for content and expression - grammar, punctuation, spelling, syntax. The journalism class in the same school does background stories on local entrepreneurs for publication in the community newspaper. Is this class journalism, economics or community development? What these classes have in common is that traditional academic competencies are being acquired and evaluated at the same time that practical skills are being learned and products of potential value to both student and community are being produced.

The possibilities for connections span all subject matter. No course is without potential practical application in the world outside the classroom. Indeed it is when subject matter confronts a practical problem that a foundation is laid for integration and for students achieving a more holistic understanding. A possibility for the greater incorporation of the community into the learning process across the curriculum is to plan for a "community linkage" within each unit of instruction taught. A slight departure from Wigginton's (1986) project orientation to learning, i.e., where each course culminates in an end-product for an audience, this model allows for a less radical departure from traditional teaching. While innovative and gifted teachers such as Wigginton succeed in structuring courses around real-life projects, most teachers do not have the experience and training to abruptly "dive into the deep end" and depart from the text-book driven course. A teacher could choose to open a unit with a community experience or culminate a unit with a product exhibited for community reaction or use. By virtue of retaining the unit concept, nearly all teachers could experience the benefits of community linkage without having to develop their own project-oriented courses. Since many rural schools and teachers are already short on time, the community linkage could be a way of attracting community resource people into the instructional program.

At issue is not the methods chosen but whether students acquire essential basic skills in a way that facilitates their application to the real world and thus enhances their motivation and understanding. Acquisition of practical skills **or** academic competency is probably a false dichotomy.

ABILITY TO SEEK AND SIFT THROUGH INFORMATION

An ability to seek out knowledge or information can be a learned skill. Facts change over time but an ability to find information is more enduring. Students can acquire an ability to gather or collect pertinent information and disregard that which is not. Knowing the difference between what is germane and what isn't is a part of that ability. As suggested by Boulding (1983) it is knowledge (understanding), more than information, that is needed. Boulding

nevertheless emphasizes that acquiring knowledge usually requires the orderly loss of information, not its mindless accumulation.

Students can acquire these skills through involvement in a variety of community improvement efforts, business enterprises, etc. The school-based development enterprise concept, championed by Jonathan Sher and associates, emphasizes students operating real businesses as a part of their education. This concept also emphasizes the necessity for students to be involved in feasibility studies, market analyses, organizational design, etc. Given a problem, students can acquire research skills by assessing what information is needed, where to find information or how to produce it if it doesn't exist. Once the information is located they can learn how to interpret it, what to disregard, and how to synthesize an informed judgement from it. This methodology can be used in virtually any subject matter. At the same time the experience can help the student to better understand how most problems do not conform to the boundaries of traditional academic disciplines.

ABILITY TO APPLY KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS IN EFFECTIVE ACTION

While the need for a basic education is paramount to all other learning, it is not sufficient as an end in itself. The ability to seek out and sift through information does little good unless it is applied to a specific issue or problem. A validity check for knowledge or information is whether it "works". The ability to consolidate one's accumulated knowledge into a plan for effective action, whether that action entails personal, social, or community involvement, is the "payoff", the proof that knowledge, and the education that provided it, is useful. That obviously can only occur if a real project, program, business enterprise, etc. has been the focus of application. Without that "real" test, knowledge and/or information remain an abstraction - something having unrealized potential.

Another feature of effective action is that it usually involves group or team effort. Effective action (especially social action) is almost always an outcome of coordinated activity among many persons. It is the essence of what effective community life is. This poses an additional challenge to the traditional notion of schooling which is predicated on individual learning and evaluation. New perspectives must be devised to evaluate group effort and better understand it's contribution to learning. That however is not a radical departure - schools do it with extra-curricular activities all the time.

Summing up his work with a variety of school-community learning projects, another South Dakota teacher stated simply: "We've created people who feel they can be part of a community". (Higbee 1990:26).

Social Connectedness

Even in rural communities, with their proclivity for personalized relationships and informal procedures. there is no longer the degree of social connectedness that seems to have prevailed when life was more confined to the community. Life style changes along with external economic, social and informational dependence have expanded the number of connections but have tended to reduce their strength. Economic circumstances and limited professional opportunities have also contributed to parents and teachers advising many rural youth of the necessity to leave. As stated by one South Dakota student: "I grew up being told the only way to make something of yourself was to get out of here." (Higbee 1990:27). The number of rural youth likely to make that statement is large.

A by-product of student community involvement is a greater appreciation for the community - whether they intend to remain there or not. Learning, or rather producing, a community's history, researching it's economic base, assessing it's social or economic needs, inventorying it's resources, etc. are all likely to make a contribution to the individual's identity while increasing social connections. And of course the other benefit is that the products produced can contribute to

a community gaining a greater sense of what it is.

High school students in another South Dakota small town undertook a project to not only raise money but also to improve the community's understanding and appreciation of itself. The town has cable television with a community channel. The student project was production of a television program of community features aired during prime town. The title and slogan of the program was the Lyman Connection - Connecting School with Family and Community. It was financed by selling commercials to local businesses. The commercials were also produced by students. The project was productive of both student learning and community development. But students not only learned, they gained in self-esteem because what they produced was valued by the community and they enhanced their own identity as they gained a new appreciation for their heritage.

CONCLUSION

The move toward school restructuring invites an appraisal of not only what is learned but more importantly how it is learned. There will continue to be a need for students to acquire mastery of basic academic skills but recent evidence suggests that many students, especially the less privileged are not acquiring those skills by conventional methods. A likely reason is that for many students learning is not effectively connected with how it can be practically used. Various analysts are also contending there is a need for students to learn how to learn - a skill that is transferable anywhere. To acquire that skill requires an active learner. In addition, especially for rural localities, it is emphasized that students should be provided an opportunity to learn more about their own locality, their own culture and economy. That has been a neglected domain in education and has likely served to cause concepts, ideas and facts to remain disconnected from many student' lives.

At a time when schools are faced with growing demands rather than fewer it is unthinkable to many educators to contemplate additions which many find it also impossible to afford. As this paper has tried to emphasize, a greater focus on students being active participants in applying ideas and concepts in their own environment is not so much an addition to the curriculum. Rather such integration is a potentially more effective method for gaining an improved understanding of basic academic skills and how they work. Because of their small size, their resource limitations and the needs of their communities rural schools may have an advantage in utilizing such methods to improve learning.

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EDUCATION AS AN INVESTMENT IN LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

Support for rural education has become a pressing public policy issue as local, state and national leaders focus their attention on strategies to promote economic activity in nonmetropolitan communities. Education, because of its impact on individual income and employment opportunity, is seen as a means of stimulating economic opportunity within the local economy. This paper provides insight into the impact that investment in local education can have on community development. The first section of the paper examines the conceptual linkage between education and economic growth. The next section discusses education in a production function framework and reviews research findings on input/output relationships in education. The last section discusses policy implications and needs for further research on the economics of education.

EDUCATION AS AN INVESTMENT IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development is a process of local, regional or national economic change that assumes structural shifts, technological advancement, and institutional adjustments (Shaffer). Development implies improved equity and the expansion of individual income and employment opportunities for a broad cross section of the population (Shaffer, Richardson). Education aids economic development because it increases the level of productivity in the work force, thereby increasing the general level of economic activity in an economy. Education improves equity, or individual's access to income and employment opportunity, to the extent that members of the general population have access to educational opportunities. Education policies to stimulate local and regional development should consider the impact that education has on the individuals receiving the education, as well as on the local or regional economy (McNamara and Deaton). Human capital theory, an economic theory that links investments in individuals to economic opportunity, provides a conceptual base for examining the relationship between local investments in education and community economic development. The next section of this paper discusses the human capital model. The following section reviews economists' research on factors that influence the production of human capital through public education. A discussion of returns to local investment in education is then presented. The concluding section discusses research needs related to the impact of education on local economic development and potential linkages between educators and researchers to begin to accomplish this research.

EDUCATION: AN INVESTMENT IN HUMAN CAPITAL

Investments in education have an impact on economic development. While economists have always recognized the value on education in terms of increased worker productivity, the conceptual model for examining the relationship between education and economic change is human capital theory which was

posited in Nobel Laureate T. W. Schultz's seminal article, "Human Capital Investment." In this article Schultz formalized a conceptual framework that examines investments in individuals in a manner similar to the evaluation of other forms of capital. Schultz defined these investments as human capital investments. Primary and secondary education, adult education, health care and extension education were the major categories of investments that he discussed in the article. The thread that linked these as human capital investments was the impact that they have on individuals ability to work productively. Each of the investments improves individuals' productivity.

Human capital theory focuses on the individual level. Investments in education, for instance, impact the skills and abilities of the individuals who are receiving the education. The skills learned are owned by the individuals who learn or develop them. These people, therefore, can earn a return on these skills by entering the work force and earning wages in exchange for the skills that they contribute to the work place.

The human capital model assumes that individuals in fact invest in themselves through education, or other means, to produce or enhance their skills and abilities. People invest in themselves (or their children as is often the case with education) with a belief that the investment will produce a positive return in the future. This future return often is in the form of higher income. Human capital theory provides a conceptual basis for evaluating investments in individuals through education (and a variety of other activities that improve individuals' productivity) and consequently, their income and employment opportunity.

While human capital theory focuses on the individual, it assumes that incremental improvements in individuals' productivity can be aggregated to the economy or societal level. Increases in an individual's skills, therefore, benefit the general economy by increasing the skill base available to business and industry. Aggregating the benefits that individuals receive from investments in education to the community level provides an economic justification for public provision of education to enhance and increase local economic growth. The broader the participation in education, the greater the level of development that occurs.

Two types of human capital, general and specific, result from investment in education (Becker). General human capital includes broad based skills and abilities that individuals learn or develop and that can be transferred from one type of activity to another. Communities (and individuals) benefit form general human capital because it enables them to adjust to economic changes such as rapid technological advancement. Workers who posses this human capital are flexible and can adapt to changing skill demands by business and industry. In a community that has a work force with strong base of general human capital, a dramatic shift in an industry's technology would not necessarily mean the a firm would close down or move to another location. Math skills, or other cognitive skills, can be considered a type of general human capital. Individuals with strong skills in mathematics can adapt their skills to a variety of work situations, depending on the prevailing local demand by business and industry.

Specific human capital, on the other hand, are skills and abilities with specific task applications. This type of human capital is not easily transferred from one job activity to another and, therefore, loses its value quickly in times of rapid technical change. Owners of specific human capital are at greater risk as the structure of the economy changes because they cannot adapt their skills to new economic situations. Communities that are dependent on industries that depend on specialized human capital skills that are transferable face potential difficulties as an economy changes. Mining skills is an example of specific human capital. As mining operations become more capital intensive and begin to displace labor, the workers who were employed in the mines have difficulty earning the same wage rates because the skills that they developed for mining are not easily transferred to other economic activities.

Communities that increase the level of education provided to local residents increase the quality of their work force by increasing the general level of human capital in the work force. This local investment transfers into expanded individual and community economic opportunity. A key for communities that wish to invest in education as a community development strategy is understanding what school factors have the greatest impact on helping students develop skills that increase their productivity. Increased investment in these school inputs increases the quality of the local educational system, and, therefore, can have the greatest impact on economic growth and individual income and employment opportunity. The next section of this paper discusses economic research on the input-output relationship in the production of education.

EDUCATION PRODUCTION

School administrator must have an idea of the input-output relationships in the production of education as they make decisions about school resource allocation throughout the education system. Teacher skill levels, pupil/teacher ratio, educational supplies and other school supplied inputs influence student performance. Economists study these input-output relationships through an economic construct known as a production function. In its most general form a production function can be written,

O = F(K, L), where:

O = output
K = capital
L = labor

The level of output, O, whether it be corn, cars or houses, is some function of the labor and capital inputs used in the production process. The impact that various inputs have in the production process, however, can be influenced by the levels of production and variation in the production processes.

Economist have examined education in a production function framework by viewing education outcomes as a function of several types of inputs into the education process. A general education production model can be specified,

O = F(S, F, C, P, I), where:

O = education output
S = school inputs
F = family inputs
C = community inputs
P = peer inputs
I = individual student inputs

Analysis of the relationships between inputs and outputs is done by specifying school input and output measures. Specification of these variables, however, requires an understanding of the objectives of the educational system and learning theory in order to gain insight into model specification. The school system objectives influence selection of variables to be used as school output, or outcome, measures. Learning theory is needed to specify variables that would be expected to influence, or produce, desired school outcomes.

Several education production studies have been conducted by economists, sociologist, educators and others. In general the results of these studies support the hypothesis that school inputs have a positive impact on educational outcomes. Table 1 summarizes a review of the findings of education production studies conducted by Hanushek. A more complete review of the education production research is found in the Hanushek article. Only a summary of the significant results of the studies reviewed by Hanushek are presented here. Hanushek's article reveals that the education production research, while providing considerable support for the hypothesis that schools impact educational outcomes, does not provide clear, definitive guidelines for what school administrators can do to improve the performance of students in their school systems. Of the more than 150 studies that examined the relationship between school inputs and student outcomes, the results generally did not support the hypothesized relationship between the input factor and student performance. As shown in Table 1, teacher experience is the only school input variable used in the education studies that had the hypothesized relationship in more than twenty five percent of the studies. And while

teacher experience was significant in 29 percent of the 140 studies that included it as a school input measure, the measure was significant with a negative sign in seven percent of the studies. Summaries of the results of other variables used in multiple studies are even less conclusive. None of these other variables were significant with the hypothesized relationship in more than 20 percent of the studies. When the measures were significant the sign often did not support the hypothesized relationship.

Table 1. Summary of Estimated Impacts of School Inputs

MEASURE	STUDIES	+*	-**	NONSIGNIFICANT
Teacher/pupil ratio	152	14	13	125
Teacher education	113	8	5	100
Teacher experience	140	40	10	90
Teacher salary	69	11	4	54
Expenditures/pupil	65	13	3	49
Administrative	61	7	1	53
Facilities	74	7	5	62

* variable had a positive, significant association with school outcomes
** variable had a negative, significant association with school outcomes

Source: Hanushek

The results summarized in Table 1 illustrate difficulties that arise when trying to generalize the results of education production studies. One difficulty with education production function estimates could be incorrect specification of the production relationships. Education is clearly a dynamic process that is impacted by a variety of school and nonschool factors. Limited understanding of the learning process and its dynamic nature has left economists with little guidance as they attempt to specify education production functions.

McNamara and Deaton hypothesized that one reason for the lack of a statistically significant relationship between per pupil expenditures and student outcomes was the failure of prior research to take into account the lagged nature of the education output response to increased inputs for education. They estimated an education production function with per pupil expenditure included as a four period polynomial lag. The results of the estimated model suggest that the expenditure measure does have a positive lagged impact on school outcomes as measured by standardized achievement test scores. Figure 1 shows the estimated relationship between expenditures and test scores. The results for fourth, eighth and eleventh grade math and reading scores suggest that the scores have a four year response period to increased expenditures. The response

increases for two periods and then decreases for two additional periods. In each case, however, the response is positive. This analysis brings into question the specification of education production functions in prior research that did not include lagged relationships between inputs and school outcomes. Clearly researchers need to address the question of the proper specification of the education process as they continue to sort out issues related to the effectiveness of education systems.

Education is generally seen as having two types of outcomes. One output category is cognitive skills. This includes reading, writing, math, science and other specific academic skills that pupils learn in school. The other category is socialization skills, such as social skills, motivation, and self image. Most analysis of education has assumed that schooling outputs are highly correlated. That is, that one measure, such as reading ability, is closely related to other schooling outcomes. Inputs that produce reading skills, therefore, are assumed to produce other school outputs.

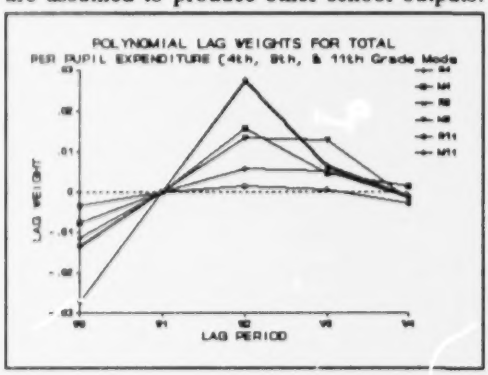

Figure 1

Education outcomes also can be viewed in quantity and quality dimensions. Quality aspects of eduction relate to the amount of learning that occurs within a period of schooling, or to the qualitative output of the school. Quantity measures of output focus on the number of students being educated and the number of years of schooling earned, independent of the amount of learning that takes place. Defining education outcomes, developing effective measures for them, and estimating production relationships remains a critical research issue.

Empirical Evidence of Returns to Education

Investments in education benefit students as well as the communities were they reside. Individuals benefit form increased income and employment opportunity. People who have earned more education generally earn higher income. Communities that invest in education benefit from economic growth and stability associated with a higher educated, more flexible work force. Communities also benefit from lower costs for welfare, health care and public safety. the following discussion briefly reviews research on individual and community economic returns from education.

RATES IF RETURN-DIRECT BENEFIT TO INDIVIDUALS

The direct benefits of education generally are measured in terms of returns to individuals through future earnings. Rates of return research utilizes the conceptual approach of benefit/cost analysis in order to calculate individual and social returns to investments in education. The approach generally measures educational benefits by income streams associated with varying numbers of years of schooling. Educational costs are measured in terms of both public and private expenditures and opportunity costs of student's time spent in school. These measures enable the researcher to compute an individual's rate of return for investments in education (Becker). Differences among income groups with different years of schooling represents the increased national output associated with incremental increases in years of schooling, or educational investments. Rates of returns for investments in education have been estimated for different educational levels, racial groups, and sex groups (Hines, Tweeten and Redfern Hansen).

An extensive review of rates of return research by Psacharopoulos concluded that private and social returns to investment in education at any level of formal education

exceed 10 percent, the level generally used to justify social capital investments. His review also revealed that private rates of return are generally higher than social returns, that both private and social returns to education decline as the level of education increases, and that private and social rates of return are generally greater in less developed countries than in developed countries. While Psacharopoulos's conclusions about returns to education may be supported by the literature, proper measures of both individual and social returns to education remain serious research issues. For example, rates of return to general education may be greater than rates of return to specialized or technical education. Yet, proper measures of these concepts are not well established. Rates of return research provides a narrow view of the benefits accruing to individuals from investment in education. Benefits associated with labor/leisure time tradeoffs and with increased nonmarket productivity are ignored.

LOCAL IMPACT/INDIRECT BENEFITS TO COMMUNITIES

Research to estimate the returns to investment in education has been generally concerned with individual or national returns, rather than analyses that attempt to estimate benefits to specific communities resulting from their investment in education. Several community growth studies, however, have included education investment measures in analyses examining local factors that influence manufacturing plant location or manufacturing employment growth. Of eleven studies reviewed (Kuehn, Braschler, and Shonkwiler; Debertin, Pagoulatos, and Smith; Smith, Deaton, and Kelch; Smith and Klindt: Kamer; Wheat; Sulaiman and Hushak; Agthe and Billings; Dorf and Emerson; Leuck; McNamara, Kriesel, and Deaton), six found a significant relationship between the education measure and plant locations or manufacturing employment growth (Kuehn, Braschler and Skonkwiler; Debertin, Pagoulatos, and Smith; Smith, Deaton, and Kelch; Kamer; Sulaiman and Hushak; Leuck; McNamara, Kriesel, and Deaton). Four of the studies used plant locations as a growth measure or dependent variable and had results that support the hypothesized relationship (Kuehn, Braschler, and Shonkwiler; Debertin, Pagoulatos and Smith; Smith, Deaton, and Kelch; McNamara, Kriesel, and Deaton). The other two studies with significant results used a measure of change in manufacturing employment as a dependent variable (Kamer; Salaiman, and Hushak). Both of these studies found an inverse relationship between the education investment measure and local economic growth.

Debertin et al., and Smith et al., found per capita educational expenditures to be positively associated with manufacturing plant location decisions. Kuehn et al., estimated a significant inverse relationship between plant locations and the distance to a technical school, supporting the hypothesis that the presence of a technical training facility has a positive influence of location decisions. McNamara et al., using a school achievement test score as an education quality measure, found a significant positive relationship between quality and location of a plant in a community. McNamara's study also found a significant inverse relationship between the percentage of the local adult population with a high school diploma and location of plants in communities.

Two manufacturing employment growth studies estimated negative, significant relationships between measures for education investment and employment growth. Sulaiman and Hushak estimated a negative relationship between employment growth and median years of schooling. Lueck found a negative relationship between employment growth and per pupil educational expenditures. These studies did not consider lag periods between the investments in education and resulting growth. The negative relationship might be a result of this misspecification. Neither author gave adequate explanations for these counter intuitive results.

The results of five other growth studies did not find a significant relationship between growth and investment in education. Two of the studies used plant locations as the dependent variable (Smith and Klindt; Agthe

and Billings). The other three studies used manufacturing employment growth, population growth, and change in the number of local plant (Kamer; Wheat; and Dorf and Emerson, respectively) as measures for growth.

In general, the estimated relationship between plant location and education investment measures supports the hypothesis that education stimulates growth. The employment and population growth models, on the other hand, had significant results with the sign in the wrong direction or nonsignificant results. Several reasons could account for human capital variables not revealing the hypothesized relationship between education and growth. First, there has been a failure to distinguish between stock and flow measures of education (McNamara, Kriesel and Deaton). Stocks represent the existing store of human capital available in a community. Flows are the marginal changes in the stock of human capital resulting from a variety of human capital investments. Incorporating the stock-flow distinction provides a more theoretically appealing model and produces empirically sound results (McNamara, Kriesel, and Deaton).

A second potential problem related to studies measuring the impact of human capital investment on economic growth is the difficulty of measuring the variety of differing and diverse skill demands by industry type. Aggregating employment by sector or even by standardized industrial code could be over-simplifying complex issues related to human capital demand by firm type. For example, some firms require low level skills at near minimum wages and, consequently, would not be attracted to more educated labor pools. Accordingly, aggregation may introduce specification errors that confound the relationship between human capital and demand for specific labor skills across industries.

CONCLUSIONS AND RESEARCH NEEDS

Research on the economic importance of education to individuals and communities clearly indicates that people and communities benefit from investment in education. Research is needed, however, to better understand the education process, what we as a society can do to improve eduction performance throughout our schools, and how specific investments in education impact local and regional economic opportunity.

Cooperation between educators and researchers to address these research needs could result in increased understanding of these critical issues. Looking at the research on education production and linking education to communities suggests that, first of all schools have an impact on education -- we need a lot more work to better specify the relationships and measure what is happening so that we can provide insights to the people making policy decisions. It is clear to me, and I think the research suggests very clearly that schools have an impact and that we need to better understand those relationships and that's hopefully what we can do collectively in the future.

Also the research suggests that education investment impacts community economic growth. Look at the income returns to individuals from education which are very strong. There has also been some research looking at the impact of education on manufacturing employment growth, on plant location and on other local economic activities that suggests that education has a positive impact on a community's ability to sustain and maintain a manufacturing sector. I am encouraged by the increased awareness that is being placed on the role of education in local economic growth and hopefully we can look at ways that people in Land Grant Universities and other universities that are doing research who are doing research on education and rural economic growth can interact more effectively with educators to better understand what schools are doing and how that impacts local economies.

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SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

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ABSTRACT

This paper documents several cases in which rural communities have had success in changing their economic circumstances. The paper, by analyzing case studies, has determined how certain essential characteristics of the communities, the economic and social circumstances, and the rural development efforts themselves have contributed to the successes. The successful cases 1) usually offer something fresh and innovative 2) offer real advantages to the firms involved, 3) usually involve an institutional innovation, and 4) involve an individual who serves as a catalyst. These factors are very difficult to replicate but suggest that good rural development efforts will start by encouraging the development of such things as leadership, entrepreneurship, ingenuity.

INTRODUCTION

This paper documents a sample of cases in which rural communities have had success in changing their economic circumstances. There is no guarantee that any of these stories can be replicated in other rural communities. But it should be possible, by careful analysis of the case studies, to determine what essential characteristics of the communities, the circumstances, and the rural development efforts themselves might have contributed to the successes. These cases are not limited to those focusing upon education, although the role of education, educators, and educated residents is stressed.

Are there underlying regularities among successful rural economic development efforts? There are a few but no clear "formula for success" emerges. In fact, it is easier to generalize about strategies which tend to fail.

Many economic development efforts have failed because they were "too little, too late." Examples include such economic development concepts as the industrial park, speculative shell buildings, tax holidays, and almost all forms of industrial recruitment. Industrial recruitment today is highly competitive, and according to a recent publication, Shadows on the Sun Belt, "the buffalo hunt is over." There are very few major firm locations and relocations each year, and the number of competing communities is large and growing.

There are a number of other strategies which are currently enjoying relative success, but perhaps only in those communities which take advantage of them before too many others "get on the band wagon." Included in this group are such strategies as research parks, business incubators, and enterprise zones. Once new economic development technologies become widely adopted, they tend to become a necessity for any community that wants to stay competitive. Over time, then the overall effect is that no one community is any better off. Many struggling communities have invested heavily in industrial parks, and shell buildings only to find them lying empty for many years--a liability rather than an asset because of the forgone opportunities.

There are some regularities among the successful rural development cases, however. The successful cases seem to have the following characteristics.

1) They usually offer something different--something fresh and innovative or at least a variation on the old theme;

2) They offer real, long-term, advantages to the firms involved. They are more than just competitive inducements. They offer the firms something that they can't get elsewhere;

3) They usually involve an institutional innovation which makes a nonmarginal transformation in the community; and

4) They frequently involve an individual, or a small group of individuals, who serve as a catalyst to effectuate the transformation noted above.

These four factors, particularly the last, are very difficult to replicate. They suggest, however, that good rural development efforts will start by encouraging the development of such things as leadership, entrepreneurship, and ingenuity.

A TAXONOMY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT SUCCESSES

The success of any effort should be measured against its goals, and the goals of rural development efforts are not all alike. While most are concerned with developing jobs and increasing income levels, some are interested in more directly improving economic quality of life. Economic quality of life, while difficult to define precisely, includes housing, health care, education, and public services. Efforts to create jobs and increase income can be further classified by their focus--whether on the recruitment of industry, the support of existing industry, or the nurturing of new, "home grown" industries.

Industrial recruitment, existing industry development, and support for new "home grown" businesses, are usually job oriented. Other goals, such as improvement in average income or economic diversification receive much less consideration. Tax holidays, industrial parks, speculative shell buildings, and promotional campaigns are usually associated with industrial recruitment. They are designed to reduce firm costs and/or expedite their relocation. It is this author's hypothesis that such strategies have little, if any, effect in the most underdeveloped communities. At a minimum, they are "ante" in a high stake "poker game" in which less developed communities are new players, with few chips, and a "stacked deck" against them. When they win the occasional "big pot" it has probably nothing to do with their "poker skills."

In Virginia, we have a Community Certification Program, sometimes called community preparedness programs elsewhere. The certification program requires communities to meet certain minimum standards before they can benefit fully from the state's recruitment promotion program. For those communities that work toward certification, the program has benefits even if they never land a major firm; they learn much about economic development and their community's strengths and weaknesses. However, for those communities which have not, or cannot, become certified, the program leaves them at a distinct disadvantage since the state's marketing efforts are channeled toward the certified communities.

A number of successful development finance programs have emerged recently. The Small Business Administration's 501, 502, 503, and now 504 programs have injected significant amounts of Federal money into new and expanding businesses (United States Small Business Administration, 1984). The programs leverage money from local banks for the financing of fixed assets such as land and buildings. The programs have been less successful in rural areas where the size of loans are smaller and the "red tape" raises the effective cost of the loans to a level too high for many purposes. Overall, the program has probably financed a lot of businesses which would have located anyway, and has had a minimal effect on overall levels of investment.

More recently, states and local governments have gotten involved in venture capital

programs (United States Small Business Administration, June 1985; Deaton and Johnson; Florida and Kenney). The private venture capital industry has been a phenomenal success, earning rates of return of up to 50 percent. Venture capital provides equity financing for businesses which have an insufficient working capital base to achieve their potential. These are relatively high risk investments (those which banks won't finance) which the venture capitalist makes less risky by combining careful management and technical assistance with the equity capital. Firms financed by venture capitalists are several times more likely to succeed than the average new business. Private venture capitalists, rarely invest in companies which are not located close by or in firms with product lines with which they are unaccustomed. Such practices almost completely preclude rural America. Not only are rural communities too remote, but the types of industry which are appropriate in rural areas are quite different from those appropriate to urban areas. Furthermore, venture capitalists usually invest in firms which have proven the marketability of their product and are in the rapid-growth stage, as opposed to the start-up stage which tends to be higher risk and have unknown growth potential. Many states now have state-sponsored or supported venture capital programs of some type. These programs involve direct or indirect (usually tax credit) financial support and/or public pension plan investment. The programs are usually for-profit and involve private capital as well as public funds. This approach allows the public funds to leverage more private funds than would otherwise be possible (Weinberg; Deaton et al.).

An interesting variation on the venture capital theme is that of venture capital clubs. These clubs are really not clubs at all, but rather forums designed to bring investors and entrepreneurs together. Communities facilitate these encounters by arranging, promoting, and holding club meetings. Entrepreneurs are invited to make a 15 minute presentation of their ideas before the crowd of venture capitalists. After all the entrepreneurs have had an opportunity to speak, they disperse themselves about the room and the venture capitalists meet with those that have ideas that interest them. The approach has been very successful in bringing ideas and money together in urban areas. Interestingly, it has resulted in a great deal of co-venturing--that is, where two or more venture capitalists contribute to a simple investment. This tends to increase the range of technical and management skills that the entrepreneur can draw upon.

Compared to the venture capital approach the revolving loan fund is a similar financing alternative which provides growing firms with critical working capital. It differs from venture capital investment in that the fund seldom takes ownership in the industry involved and usually does not earn significant profits. For these reasons, revolving loan funds do not leverage as much private funds as the venture capital programs do.

Consider the case of the Economic Development Fund of Northern Vermont. This $500,000 fund is used to make loans to promising businesses in the Northern Vermont Region which cannot get funding from banks. The fund has been able to leverage private funds at a rate of about 7:1. About 13 percent of the funds are for start up businesses and the remaining 87 percent for expansions. In the first three years of operation, the fund was credited with creating and retaining over 650 jobs, directly. The average public investment per job has been just over $1000. An unexpected by-product has been the increased willingness of bankers in the area to lend money to growing industries for working capital (Deaton and Johnson).

The business incubator is another relatively new idea that has had considerable success (United States Small Business Administration, 1986a, 1986b). The basic idea is that start-up businesses lack a wide range of essential ingredients. Ideally, they should start small until they perfect their process, yet the costs involved in a small scale operation may doom the business from the beginning. The businesses require space; equipment; management, accounting, and technical assistance; working capital; back office support such as computers, copying, and fax; and training. The business incubator is a facility where fledgling businesses can set up shop in a flexible facility for

two to five years until they have matured enough to move into permanent facilities. While in the incubator, the businesses are provided with all of the services above more efficiently than the businesses could provide them independently. The incubator company may even take ownership interest in the firm in return for the services provided to it.

In 1986 there were an estimated 155 incubators and it is expected that by 1990 there will be between 750 and 1000 facilities. Currently about 14 percent of these incubators are being developed in non-metropolitan counties (Weinberg, March 1987). There are many examples of successful rural incubators--Monmouth, Illinois; Bennington, Vermont; and Girard, Warren, Meadville, and Ridgeway, Pennsylvania are just a sample. The Girard incubator had 18 tenants as of June 1986 employing about 250 area residents. An interesting aspect of incubators is that the tenants tend to learn by observing each other and sharing problems and solutions (Weinberg, March 1987).

The major hurdles experienced by rural incubators, relative to their urban counterparts, include inadequate infrastructure, a lack of experience in business development of this nature, a lack of access to specialized services, and a paucity of venture capital and other grants and funds (Weinberg, February 1987, March 1987). Developers of rural incubators must be selective to ensure that businesses they work with have a reasonable chance of succeeding in rural areas. Even more importantly, they must ensure that they provide new businesses with the services they need the most.

A different approach to rural economic development focuses on existing industry. Retention and expansion is a term used to describe efforts to support existing industry rather than create or attract new industries. The primary tool of retention and expansion programs is the industry visitation (Lee and Hawthorn). Volunteers are trained to survey local businesses and to detect problems and opportunities. When surveyors discover an opportunity to aid an existing industry, economic development specialists are brought in to help out. Consider the case of Washington County, Ohio. During visitations, a chemical company indicated that it intended to go outside the county to find employees to fill 40 job vacancies because all the local applicants failed a screening test. The local college intervened and set up a training program to train the potential employees. Following completion of the first class the company began hiring from the pool of trained labor.

Job training is an increasingly important aspect of rural economic development because the emerging era of rapid technological change will cause frequent obsolescence of skills. It is estimated that of current students, one in twelve will change careers each year (Hartman). A well trained productive labor force not only is attractive to new industry, but it also increases the probability that a business will succeed, and it improves the community's quality of life (Currin).

Rural job training must be combined with other conditions in order to succeed (DeLellis). At least one of the following must be present: successful job placement, simultaneous job creation, or job upgrading. Furthermore, many types of job training are difficult to provide in a college setting (because of the need for hands on experience and access to specialized equipment) even though the involvement of a college is essential.

Nash Technical College, in Rocky Mount, NC is credited with contributing to 15,000 jobs in a 14 year period. The process began when the college convinced a firm to locate in the Rocky Mount area by offering a specialized training package for its employees. Since then this relationship between the college and businesses, has led to the attraction of several other firms (Currin).

Similarly, Rowan Technical College was instrumental in attracting Philip Morris USA to North Carolina. The college helped the company inventory its skills requirement and design training programs (Currin).

A common attribute of successful training programs is effective on-the-job training. Such rural ventures as Kentucky's Appalshop, which produces video tapes, films, recordings, and photographs, have taken a nucleus of skills, and through on-the-job training and apprenticeships developed a rather large pool

of skilled labor. The critical issue in this and similar cases is that the greatest training needs occur when the company has the least ability to provide them. A majority of these ventures have succeeded only because of the efforts of local colleges and subsidized training programs such as the Jobs Training Partnership Act (DeLellis).

Another interesting example of on-the-job training is offered by Hocking Technical College of Nelsonville, Ohio. Hocking operates profit oriented businesses while training students in various skill related to the operation of the businesses. The businesses include a sawmill, a hotel, and a ceramic products wholesaling and retailing business. Hocking serves a rural area where students would not otherwise have access to extensive internships and apprenticeships. In addition, Hocking attracts a majority of its students from outside the area it was designed to serve. The combination of the jobs and income created by its business ventures and the jobs and income created by the activity generated by the school itself make Hocking Technical College the area's second largest employer and one of the most important components of the area's economic base.

Public-Private Partnerships include various ventures in which the interests of private firms in the well-being of the community is exploited to improve local conditions. There are numerous examples of successful partnerships (and probably lots of failures as well). It is very difficult to generalize about these approaches; however, strong, visionary leadership is usually an element.

In Canton, Illinois the local library director, concerned about the declining population and economic base, decided that the library had a responsibility to help (Wilson). The library, as a local source of information, decided to develop a local data base on the city's resources, design and publish promotional material, and make their reference section available for economic development activities. In order to provide these services, they found that their reference section had to be expanded to include more types of data and material. The library then helped raise money to hire a marketing director, organized a network of former residents for fund raising, organized seminars, and offered to provide an on site research collection for an incubator that it is promoting.

In Montgomery County Virginia, local builders, building supply companies, and other businesses, donated goods and services to build a speculative shell building in the county's industrial park. When the shell building was sold in spring of 1989, the investors were repaid for their contributions. They are considering repeating the project at another county site. Interestingly, before the shell building was sold, its presence was credited with attracting two new industries to the county. Industrial prospects which came to see the shell building eventually purchased other industrial sites and located in the county.

Education is, in general, a key element in long-term economic development efforts. In particular, economic or entrepreneurial education is believed to have a number of complementary effects on rural community development. First, entrepreneurship education better prepares students for the rigors of living in underdeveloped rural areas by helping them understand the issues involved in business location and success. In addition, entrepreneurial education increases the opportunity for high school graduates to become employed and for communities to have a stronger economic base. Finally, it is believed that economic education, because it is exciting and practical, will help keep the at-risk students in school. There are a number of particularly interesting success stories related to entrepreneurial education.

In Shelbyville, Tennessee the American Can Foundation collaborated with the Bedford County Educational Development Foundation to supplement the salaries of school teachers (McAndrew). They did this by underwriting their salary while they worked at non-profit and public service jobs during the summer. The effect has been to enhance school teacher salaries, while putting some very good resources to work on community issues. In the long run, the program should also attract and retain high quality teachers with less strain on local government budgets.

Another type of public-private educational partnership includes the adoption of schools by local industries or universities. In this model, industries and universities donate the time of their personnel to enrich the experience of students, they donate the use of equipment (computers for examples) for educational purposes, or they arrange temporary work assignments for teachers in their firms to give them on the job experience (Hartman).

The REAL programs (Rural Entrepreneurship through Action Learning) in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, help students start an actual small business in their community. Businesses such as construction companies, day-care centers, and restaurants have been started and are now owned and operated by students. They have created new jobs in their community and provided services and products that would not otherwise have been available (Hartman).

Finally, one last approach to community development activities combines features of many of the programs which have already been discussed. The typical Comprehensive Program includes a range of financial services (including fixed asset financing, operating lines of credit, grants, venture capital), a technical assistance program, a technological transfer program, and possibly, an incubator facility. There are numerous examples of such programs. Two will be described--Rural Enterprises Inc. (REI) of Oklahoma and The Rural Virginia Development Foundation (RVDF). The first is a nonprofit industrial development corporation which has functioned since 1980, while the second is a nonprofit foundation with for-profit subsidiaries which is just being established in Virginia (Deaton et al.).

REI is an SBA 501(c)(3) industrial development corporation responsible for job creation in Southeastern and South Central Oklahoma (Rural Enterprises Incorporated) Since 1983, it has been designated as a national demonstration model. The major component programs of REI include; 1) an innovation evaluation program which relies on specialists to evaluate ideas submitted to REI for consideration; ideas which are considered sound are then supported by REI; 2) a series of arrangements with such agencies as NASA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in which REI transfers technology developed by the research agencies; 3) financial programs including a fixed asset SBA program, Urban Development Action Grants (UDAG) from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and a revolving loan program with funds from the Economic Development Administration (EDA); 4) technical assistance programs, such as one with HUD to package UDAG grants and engineering consulting for clients; 5) a marketing program to promote the products of it's clients; and 6) a business incubator facility. In 1984 REI was credited with the creation and/or retention of 295 jobs.

The RVDF differs from the REI in two primary ways. First, it involves venture capital, as well as more conventional financing. Second, it is much more oriented to private investment. It has developed a for-profit investment corporation called the VEDCORP which is owned by private investors, and will co-venture with private venture capitalists when appropriate. The VEDCORP is primarily funded by banks, utilities, and major corporations with an interest in a healthy rural economy.

CONCLUSIONS

Examples presented here represent a small fraction of the successful economic development efforts in rural communities. However, even in this small sample the variety and diversity of these efforts become obvious. They do have some basic characteristics in common. In most cases there is a pivotal individual or group that envisions the program, and a clear and meaningful advantage is created for employers. Many of the programs involve a new institution created to further the goals of the program. It is hoped that this review of successful strategies will help rural communities choose an appropriate economic development strategy.

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OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO RURAL SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

The barriers to rural school leadership in community development are many and complex. They are embedded in the traditions of rural communities, the economic crises of rural America, and the mindset of rural educators.

One can easily become distressed and discouraged when contemplating the present condition of many rural schools. The nepotism and politics of school personnel practices, the mismatch between school curriculum and community needs, the perception of school as an inhospitable place to be entered only when necessary, the few rural educators who are true leaders, and the limited resources available to schools to perform their primary task of educating the youth of rural America. However, to itemize the numerous barriers is to immerse oneself in what is wrong in rural schools and communities rather than to focus on what is right in rural America. Rather if rural school leaders will establish worthy school improvement/community development goals and begin working toward goal attainment, it is likely that the various barriers can be gradually overcome. Successful school improvement initiatives will gradually wear away the barriers and create an atmosphere where change efforts become easier.

This paper will attempt to present positive, proactive approaches to each of the major barriers listed above. Everything described is beginning to happen somewhere, but no one strategy or success is adequate. Rather a synergism of approaches which build one upon the other and involve the community in redefining itself around the school and its other strengths is the only hope.

RURAL SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS

If rural schools are to emerge as leaders in community development they must become proactive rather than reactive and establish credibility within the community as educational institutions. Unless rural schools are perceived as being educationally effective, they are likely to be unable to achieve the desired community leadership role.

How do rural schools gain this image of educational effectiveness? First,they attend to the business of providing quality educational experiences for all students regardless of socio-economic background (Edmonds, 1982). More specifically an effective school is one in which "95 percent of all children score at or above grade level regardless of their background, where teachers are highly satisfied, and where citizens respect their school" (Thomas, 1986). Other indicators of school effectiveness in addition to scholastic attainment include appropriate classroom behavior, low absenteeism, positive attitudes toward learning, continuation in education, gainful employment and social functioning (Rutter, 1983). However, these are outcomes. The important question is what happens within schools to produce these outcomes?

1. The principal is an educational leader who keeps the mission (goals) of the school at the forefront of thought and action.

2. The school is safe and attractive. (In a rural school this means that the building is well-maintained.)

3. The staff combats truancy and drop-out.

4. Parents work with the teachers to improve the learning program.

5. The staff believes students can learn and maintains high expectations for students and themselves.

6. Learning to read is the first priority.

7. The majority of student time is spent on learning activities.

8. There are frequent checks of student progress.

9. Staff development is tied to specific school goals.

10. Special programs are carefully designed. (Thomas, 1986; Edmonds, 1982).

If rural schools are not effective both in process and outcome, then someone must have the courage to make necessary changes within the school hierarchy. The most expedient approach, although possibly politically unpopular in the short term, is to appoint a new principal and give him/her the responsibility and authority to create an effective school. In the long term, school success is politically popular.

To validate their effectiveness, schools should seek and attain regional accreditation. The accreditation process is voluntary, but the attainment certifies that the school has met the policies and standards established by the regional accreditation agency.

From a community standpoint, regional accreditation is an attraction for current and prospective employers as an indicator of the kinds of schools their management personnel desire for their children and the source of a trained/trainable workforce for progressive business and industry. The accreditation process involves a self-study to determine if the minimum regional standards of staff, program and facility are being met and an in-depth analysis using nationally developed evaluative criteria of all aspects of the school program to determine strengths and areas which need improvement. The evaluation is based on the assumption that a school's effectiveness should be judged on the basis of its stated philosophy and goals and the extent to which it is meeting the needs of the students and community (NSSE, 1986). An outside team of evaluators verifies the self-study and makes further recommendations which become the basis of an on-going program of school improvement (SACS, 1982). Awarding of accreditation is a public affirmation that the quality of the school is comparable to other schools in the multi-state region served by the accrediting agency.

Although the school effectiveness emphasis is education at its best, it is also a community development vehicle. The educational opportunities provided are directly related to the present and future quality of life for community residents. If young people are academically successful and remain in school, they will experience more self-satisfaction in their vocational and personal lives. Successful children are a source of pride for their parents and extended family while gaining the tools necessary for future success.

PERSONNEL RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND TRAINING

Schools are no better than their administrative, instructional and support personnel. Rural schools tend to be staffed by local residents at the exclusion of highly qualified outside applicants. The situation has improved somewhat through state department of education refusal to approve waivers for non-licensed individuals when licensed teachers are available. However, given two applicants licensed for the same position, the applicant who was born in the county will be hired over a better qualified applicant who is not from the county.

Why do many rural school board members (and administrators) favor local applicants. First, it makes the local residents (voters) happy by rewarding young people who have completed college and chosen to stay at home. Second, local hiring results in lower teacher turnover which is perceived as being positive. Third, many of these local teachers are outstanding teachers who work above and beyond normal expectations to provide quality education for the children of their extended family and community. Fourth, local teachers are assumed to understand the community's culture and to be less likely to become controversial.

Are there advantages of hiring outside applicants? First, they tend to be better qualified and more experienced because of the level of competition. Second, they bring new ideas and new energy into the school. They see possibilities where others have long since accepted the status quo. Third, if they are unhappy they will either work to change the situation or will find something else to do. Generally, outsiders who survive the probationary period and are awarded tenure are effective teachers who work within the system to accomplish gradual change for the good of the students. Fourth, even though outsiders are more at risk than locals, outsiders are more likely to be risktakers. Interestingly, if the risks are perceived to be in the best interests of the students, they will generally be supported and the change agent teacher or administrator will gain great respect and admiration within the community and among fellow teachers.

Another major personnel problem present in most rural secondary schools is balancing the community's demands for coaches to build strong athletic teams with the school's needs for well qualified teachers in the academic areas. Too often, a person is hired as a coach with little scrutiny of teaching credentials or ability. In a few years the individual tires of coaching or has too many losing seasons so a new coach must be hired. In the meantime the former coach has been tenured as a teacher and must be kept on staff. This scenario results in rural high schools with half the faculty consisting of current or former coaches licensed to teach health or physical education and little else. Many openings for teachers in high schools, junior highs, and middle schools are tied to applicants' willingness to coach. No matter how qualified or experienced, the non-athletic applicant will not be considered.

Whatever the selection techniques, changes are necessary in the pre-service education and staff development of rural teachers and administrators. In my opinion, the most critical areas are certification clusters, rural sociology, technology, and leadership. The current national fervor over improving teacher preparation by requiring a liberal arts major with a fifth year teacher education internship could result in teachers being even more poorly prepared to teach in rural schools than currently exists. Rural teachers need broad-based preparation programs which license them to teach a wide range of subjects. To prepare and license a teacher for only one science or only one area of social studies is to severely limit their employment potential in rural schools and restrict curricular options. Likewise, most rural school districts are unable to make an appreciable difference in the beginning pay-scale of a newly hired teacher even if s/he has a master's degree.

Teacher education and staff development programs do not adequately address school and community culture. All teachers need to study rural, urban and suburban culture as a way of understanding their own cultural antecedents, assessing the kind(s) of cultural setting in which they wish to work, and realizing that one responsibility of the teacher is learning the cultures of the students. Rarely does one truly understand ones own culture until another culture is experienced. Rural youth who attend regional universities and then return to their home communities to teach have a highly limited view of the world which restricts their potential as teachers.

Technology is the best hope of rural schools for bridging the gap between local resources and the educational needs of a new century. Unfortunately, rural teachers are among the most "technophobic" individuals in our society. The low educational level of rural communities creates a situation where having a computer either at home or at school is the

exception rather than the rule. Since computers are in such short supply and so expensive, teachers are afraid to experiment with them. There is no one in the school to provide assistance and there is no time to sit and work through software. Teacher education programs provide base level training but until teachers have computer access for planning and record keeping on a regular basis, they will be hesitant about using computers for instruction. If teachers are reluctant to use computers, distance learning and videodisc technology as integral instructional components are beyond their imagination.

No matter how thorough or how long, teacher preparation programs should not be expected to provide all the knowledge, skill, and understanding a teacher needs for a lifetime. As the role of the school changes, as technology advances, as society causes children to change, as more is learned about how children learn, educators must participate in staff development designed to help them cope successfully with these changes. To be effective, staff development must address real needs of teachers, be well planned and implemented, provide for follow-up and guided practice, and be supported by adequate resources (Oliva, 1989).

CURRICULAR MODIFICATIONS

If schools are to be leaders in community development, they must teach those skills, and attitudes which citizens need to support community development. In addition to basic skills and basic citizenship, schools should teach localized units of study in government/civics, economics, career education, and vocational education. Technology education, both as a subject and as a way of learning, cannot be neglected.

Most young people who graduate from high school (and their parents) are blissfully ignorant about how a tax rate is set, the relationship between taxes and services, the responsibilities and duties of local elected officials, state laws governing daily activities, and how to effect change through local political processes. Teachers fail to include this in social studies courses because it isn't in the textbook, it might lead to charges of political activism within the classroom, or they themselves do not know the information. It is a reasonable responsibility of schools to establish policy mandating instruction in local government, provide staff development to insure that the teachers are proficient in the topic, and to monitor the implementation of this curricular component. Some local governmental officials will be eager to cooperate; others will find it politically expedient to do so. It is hoped that as youth become knowledgeable about local government, they will discuss local issues with their parents and, as adults, they will be informed voters and more likely to be politically active.

While a semester or more of economics is generally required for graduation from high school, these courses are more likely to concentrate on textbook definitions of gross national product than on the economic realities of the local community. Again teachers are themselves often as uninformed about the workings of the local economy as are their students unless they should happen to be the spouse of a local business person.

A search of ERIC revealed several sets of curriculum materials which might be used as models in local development of materials. At Tennessee Technological University we are currently developing a set of materials which teachers in grades 5-9 can use in studying business and industry in the Upper Cumberland. The materials will consist of videotaped field trips to retail, service, manufacturing, and extractive industries and study guides which teachers can use to guide students through the inputs (raw materials, personnel, infra-structure), operations, and outputs (products or services, taxes, worker benefits) of these industries. Teachers will be encouraged to follow-up these activities with studies of additional business/industry through field trips, video-taping, interviews or use of resource persons. Emphasis will be placed on the entry level skills required for various local jobs and the pay, benefits, and working conditions associated with those jobs as well as the economic and environmental impact of the business/industry. These materials cannot be

developed without the cooperation of local business and industry but it has been our experience thus far that business owners/managers are willing to cooperate with reasonable requests. The only restriction we have encountered is not being able to videotape processes which are regarded as industrial secrets.

In rural schools, career and vocational education must realistically address vocational opportunities currently and potentially available within commuting distance of the community. Since many rural families value their children settling near home, career and vocational education programs which include information and training for locally available occupations can gain support for the school. Students who are aware of local job opportunities can make more informed career choices and select the appropriate secondary and post-secondary training to prepare for their chosen vocation.

Vocational education in rural schools is a critical component of the school role in community development. To offer courses for which there are few jobs available or to teach skills which are out of date is indefensible. Given the costs of equipping most vocational laboratories and keeping them up-to-date and the limited funding available through normal funding channels, schools must form cooperative job training programs with local business and industry. While more common in urban than rural areas, examples can be found where business or industry has equipped school laboratories, provided instructors, and guaranteed jobs to students completing a vocational course. All vocational courses must emphasize work ethics, adaptability to changing requirements, and technological applications. Entrepreneurship should be a common offering in rural schools integrated with language arts, mathematics, business, and other courses to create a body of learning which will enable graduates to succeed as employee or owner/manager of a small business. The curriculum should include a study of market forces including forecasting. Other specific courses might include Introduction to technology, robotics, or computer information systems.

Rural schools face a dilemma in regards to the selection, acquisition, and implementation of technology. As a result of a state contract, most of the computers in rural schools are Apple's that have been purchased in the past seven years. IBM is now attempting to take over the school market in the state of Tennessee through competitive equipment grants to teacher education institutions and schools. The Apple loyalists cite the heavy investment already made in Apple, the availability of software, and the familiarity of teachers with the equipment. The IBM advocates counter with the powerfulness of the software, the opportunity to acquire new equipment to replace or supplement existing labs, and the prevalence of IBM in the workplace.

Another debate revolves around distance learning. Through the leadership of the Center for Rural Schools at York Institute, most Tennessee high schools may now receive a satellite dish, VCR, and monitor from their regional electric cooperative. The satellite programs in physics and German from Oklahoma State University have been field tested at York with good results. The critics contend that distance learning cannot be as good as a certificated teacher in the classroom. However, for many rural schools the choice may be between the satellite programs or no specialized classes at all.

Presently, videodisc technology is so far beyond the present fiscal capability of most rural schools that little discussion of its instructional merit has occurred. Those teachers who have used it see the potential for videodisc technology to replace textbooks in the sciences and social studies in the near future.

Rural schools should not develop instructional technology for the sake of technology but for the good of the students. First, computer instruction can narrow the gap between the achievers and non-achievers. Second, the majority of jobs (white and blue collar) of the future will require some level of computer competence. Third, it is unethical to maintain an inferior instructional program in a subject when quality programming is both available and affordable. Fourth, it is technology that will lure many adults back into education and training programs. Adults will enroll in computer-based literacy or GED programs at

the local school or college under the guise of taking a computer course.

The community development implications of the recommended curricular modifications appear self-evident. The local community is a learning resource superior to a textbook provided the teacher is as well trained in teaching from the community as from a textbook. But teachers cannot be expected to teach a community based curriculum without training such as that provided by the Foxfire Teacher Network. Goodman (1987) calls these empowered teachers. Until teacher education programs begin preparing teachers in community and technology based learning, school systems or state departments of education must provide staff development and instructional aids for teacher.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

The literature on community education is voluminous and replete with models developed through the leadership of the Mott Foundation. However, the community education concept seems to develop a new dimension when analyzed as a potential vehicle for rural school leadership in community development. Opening the school to adults whether for basic literacy, GED preparation, off-campus college courses, aerobics, or cake decorating creates a community sense of ownership in the school. As more adults frequent the school for a variety of purposes, activities directed toward community development can be provided with less suspicion regarding the motives. Some of these activities might include adult versions of the government/civics or local economics curricula discussed earlier, leadership training, use of the school by other governmental agencies, public hearings, voter registration, political forums, specialized courses for business, evening courses in vocational or computer laboratories, or other local events. The more the school is perceived as the center of the community, the greater the variety of usages, the more people who will visit the schools, and the more community members will feel comfortable participating in a variety of activities which contribute to the quality of life or human resource development, both critical components of community development.

EDUCATORS AS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT LEADERS

According to Bennis (1984), leaders share four qualities: (1) intensity of vision; (2) ability to communicate that vision; (3) conviction in their beliefs; and (4) positive self-regard. True leaders empower their co-workers. Terrey (1986) summarizes concern that persons in educational leadership roles tend to lack vision, select survivalism over risk, and emphasize management over leadership. Lagana (1989) outlines the role of the school superintendent in staff empowerment. Aieta and others (1988) envision the effective principal of the year 2000 being both an academic and political leader. Poole and Okeafor (1989) discuss the effects of teacher efficacy on curriculum change. Rural schools do not become community development leaders without educators being leaders, both as educators and community members. Why is it that in most rural communities the professional educators are the best educated and the most politically inactive citizens? Although in some southern states, the superintendency is an elected position, it is generally considered inappropriate for principals and teachers to serve on the county commission, be active in political campaigns, initiate or sign petitions, or demonstrate for a cause. As long as educators allow undereducated or uninformed citizens to be the local opinion and decision makers, rural communities will continue to resist change.

How can rural educators break this tradition of non-leadership? First, it is a general observation that forgiveness is more easily obtained than permission. Educators should not ask the community if they might become leaders; rather they should start acting like leaders. They should begin by creating a vision of what the schools of their community should be in the year 2000. The creation of that vision should involve community residents but it should be led by educators--superintendents, central office supervisors, principals, and

teachers. Given the linkages between the school and the community, it is impossible to envision the future of schools without including a vision of the community. Strategic planning is a model which several rural school systems are using to structure a broad base of involvement in building a vision. Educators must then share the vision and communicate it to all constituencies. Public relations and media techniques will be necessary. Tennessee Tech is currently working on a regional development project involving a group of nine rural school systems which have (after eight months of discussion) defined public relations (that need for two-way communication) as a major need and have hired a marketing specialist to work with teachers and administrators in developing skills for communicating with media, business and industry, and parents. If the process can empower educators to communicate positively about school, then these educators can communicate a vision of schools.

Sher (1988) admonishes that "vision is vital, but not enough." He urges the creation of a rural voice to represent the needs of rural schools (and communities) to policy makers at the local, state and national level. The voice must be singular. The rugged individualism of rural America often surfaces when efforts are made to unite behind a single cause. Rather than support that cause, other rural educators lead an opposition because their perceived need is greater. One of the greatest obstacles in the regional development project has been developing the idea that "community" is greater than one small town and its surrounding countryside. Rather "community" means a definable geographic territory, a commonality of characteristics and/or needs, and collective action. Until rural educators and rural people realize that their problems are shared beyond the county line and that solutions to those problems lie in concerted action, community development will be limited and short-lived. Just as Nachtigal (1985) and the Mid-Continent Regional Education Laboratory have created multi-district school improvement clusters, so must educators who would be community development leaders join forces with other educators to create community development clusters. Such leadership is risky because the other county may get the prize (the federal grant, the new business, etc) or the person out front will get criticized whether things go well or not. At this point the fourth characteristic of leadership, positive self-regard, becomes necessary for survival. A network of like-minded educator/leaders can sustain one another through the lonely hours before the victories (Sher, 1988).

RESOURCE ATTAINMENT

Rural schools are inadequately funded through state minimum foundation formulas based on total student enrollment and local taxes drawn from declining local economies. The law suits successfully filed in several states and studies such as that by Honeyman, Thompson, and Wood (1989) are conclusive that rural school funding is inadequate for educational equity. This does not mean that individual school districts should wait for the courts or legislatures to solve the problems of rural school funding. Rather local districts must reallocate existing state and local contributions for maximum cost benefit, compete for outside monies, and locate resources which would otherwise cost money. Reallocation of existing funds may require policy changes at the federal, state and local level to increase the fiscal autonomy of the school district. In rural schools, holding the district accountable for delivery of a minimum program without tying dollars to program components can be more cost effective provided local superintendents, boards, and principals are committed to educational quality and wise use of resources.

There are additional monies available through state departments of education and other agencies which routinely circulate requests for proposals to schools. Unfortunately many rural school districts do not compete for these funds. Some of the reasons given are inadequate personnel time for applying, feeling that they would not be successful even if they tried, too many restrictions for too little money, money tied to someone else's priorities.

Beyond regular school channels, there are numerous federal, private, and foundation

sources of money which are awarded for projects consistent with the needs of rural schools. There was a time when I believed that one should not compete for outside monies unless the guidelines were congruent with previously identified local priorities. Now schools are encouraged to compete for almost any source of funds but to adapt the guidelines to meet their needs.

One of the most expensive resources for rural schools is outside resource persons. Not only are few funds available to hire consultants but local boards of education are generally unwilling to spend local dollars on outside people. But quality consultants are available through universities, governmental agencies, and private organizations. Many highly trained professionals have a public service/training responsibility in their job descriptions but may not be offering those services to rural schools. Additionally, rural schools tend to ask for help in "filling up" state mandated inservice time rather than for assistance in achieving locally determined priorities. Another problem is that schools tend to seek assistance exclusively from teacher education faculty when someone else might serve their needs better. University faculty in business, engineering, agriculture, home economics, and liberal arts have public service responsibilities and can benefit the university and their college by working with rural schools to improve the quality of graduates (and the reputation of the university in the service area.) Here are some examples of university involvement in rural schools in the Tennessee Tech service area which are based outside teacher education.

1. The Associate Dean of the College of Engineering, an economic development specialist in the College of Business and the vocational education specialist in the College of Education are providing consultant services to the Regional Development Project.

2. A marketing specialist in the College of Business is developing a regional school public relations campaign. Funding comes from the school systems, Tennessee Tech and the Tennessee Valley Authority.

3. Faculty from the Departments of Mathematics, Computer Science, Physics, Chemistry, Earth Science, and Biology are planning a series of teacher staff development workshops for this spring. Funding for faculty time will be federal dollars administered through a state agency. The teachers will be released for the workshop days by substitutes provided through federal dollars administered through another state agency.

4. In response to a request from secondary Mathematics and science teachers, the College of Engineering faculty have compiled a workbook of mathematics problems which are engineering applications. These workbooks will be printed and distributed using Project EQuality funds.

5. Faculty in the Department of Music and Art have provided
concert series in rural schools for the past three years. Travel and faculty pay came from the Tennessee Arts Commission with a university match of administrative and rehearsal time.

Beyond the university, personnel and other resources are available from private sources such as service clubs and business/industry. Many manufacturing plants have waste materials of use to schools, are willing to donate their
products for various uses, or donate personnel time as resource persons, and open their facilities for field trips if they perceive the improvement of local educational opportunity in their own best interests. It is the responsibility of rural educators to initiate contact asking for specific help, work with the potential donor to determine what the best contribution would be, and then see that the business' contribution results in community good will. In Cookeville a group of business contribute once a year to a fund which is then distributed to all schools on a per pupil basis in response to proposals from the schools. Rural schools in surrounding counties are collecting information on employers of local residents in hopes of creating similar contribution systems for their schools.

CONCLUSION

I would like to attempt closure by drawing parallels between effective rural schools and the twenty clues to rural community survival developed by Wall and Braglio (1987) in their study of successful rural Nebraska communities.

1. Rural School Effectiveness. Surviving rural communities have evidence of community pride, place emphasis on quality in business and community life, are willing to invest in the future, have a cooperative community spirit, have a strong belief in and support for education, use fiscal resources wisely, and attend to a sound and well-maintained infrastructure.

2. Personnel Recruitment, Selection, and Training and Educators as Community Development Leaders. Surviving rural communities practice a deliberate transition of power to younger generation of leaders, accept women in leadership roles, and use a participatory approach to community decision making.

3. Curricular Modifications. Surviving rural communities realistically appraise future opportunities, are aware of competitive positioning, know their physical environment, have an active economic development program, use a problem-solving approach to providing health care, and use sophisticated information resources.

4. Community Education. Surviving rural communities have a strong multi-generational family orientation and a strong presence of traditional institutions that are integral to community life.

5. Resource Attainment. Surviving rural communities are willing to seek help from the outside.

The "bottom line" for rural schools pondering their role in community development is the "conviction that in the long run you have to do it yourself" (Wall and Braglio, 1987). If rural schools are not part of the community development leadership, chances are that community development will fail.

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BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS FOR PEOPLE:
Addressing the Rural South's Human Capital Needs

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This report was written by Dr. Beaulieu with input and review from the Task Force. The full report is available from the Southern Rural Development Center, Box 5446, Mississippi State, MS 39762. Please request SRDC publication No. 117.

INTRODUCTION

The South remains a region of contrasts -- a metropolitan area whose spirited growth and economic expansion have introduced marked improvements in the quality of life of its residents -- versus a nonmetropolitan South, whose current social and economic woes have threatened to whittle away at the gains experienced by rural Southerners during the 1970s. These distinctive paths of development are the end product of a number of key factors. Most basic of these, as argued in this report, are the human capital shortcomings that characterize the South's nonmetropolitan locales.

The following is a brief synopsis of a report produced by the Task Force on *Alternatives for Leadership and Human Resource Development in Rural Communities in the South.* The committee, consisting of research and extension faculty drawn from 1862 and 1890 land grant institutions in the South, was organized by the **Southern Rural Development Center** to explore the near and long-term human resource issues facing the rural South.

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN THE RURAL SOUTH

The 1980s are proving to be a time when many areas of the rural south are being forced to recognize the harsh realities of their social and economic status in the region and in the United States. This is difficult in light of the fact that only a few short years ago, rural areas of the South were being lauded as meccas of economic and social progress.

But today, the de-escalated rate of growth in population, the over-dependence on a stagnating goods-producing economy, the high rates of unemployment and under-employment, and the pervasive conditions of low-income and high rates of poverty, are visible symptoms of the monumental social and economic problems that confront today's rural communities of the South. What options exist for the region's rural areas? How can communities and their leaders begin to capably address the myriad of problems threatening their long-term well-being? It is some of the questions that provide a context for the forthcoming sections of this report.

IS RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THE ANSWER?

There is a belief in some circles that the diversification of the rural economy is key to revitalizing the rural communities of the South. With the massive departure of manufacturing industries, coupled with the uncertainly associated with the agricultural and nature resource-based sectors, it is suggested that the future of the South's rural areas lies with the growth of small business enterprises, with the stimulation of entrepreneurial activities, and with the recruitment of service-producing and high-tech industries (Extension Service/USDA, 1986; Friedman, 1987; Pulver, 1987). The key issue, however, is whether the bulk of rural communities in the region are positioned to capture these types of industries? Unfortunately, the evidence appears to suggest that it is not.

Granted, low taxes, low wage levels, minimal or no unionization, limited public expenditures for services, and the provision of land, buildings or other sweeteners, did induce businesses and industries to locate in the South's rural areas in years past (Corporation for Enterprise Development, 1987). Often, these attributes provided Southern states (especially the rural areas of these states) with high rankings on the traditional business climate assessment measures. But, on the new indicators of economic capacity being formulated for the high growth industries of today and tomorrow, rural Southern communities are judged as highly deficient (Rosenfeld, 1988).

In surveying the rural South, it is clear that the fundamental problem impeding realization of measured improvements in the economic climate of rural southern communities is the state of the region's human capital resources. Vibrant economies are unsustainable in a rural south that leads the nation in the rate of high school dropouts, in the proportion of adults suffering from functional illiteracy (Ross and Rosenfeld, 1988), or in an area having the lowest percentage of college-educated adults (Swanson and Butler, 1987). The necessary precursor to the realization of an economic development renaissance in rural communities of the South is a full-fledged commitment to enhancing the human capital resources of these localities -- to addressing the serious problem of high school dropouts, and to attacking the issue of adult illiteracy. Only in this way can economic security for the South's rural communities and its citizens be truly enhanced (Deaton and Deaton, 1988).

STATUS OF THE RURAL SOUTH'S HUMAN CAPITAL RESOURCES

The human capital resources problems that plague rural America are clearly most applicable to the South. Why is this so? For one, the South is home for nearly half of the nonmetropolitan residents in this country (O'Hare, 1988). Second, factors commonly associated with human capital deficiencies -- such as poverty, illiteracy, and low educational achievement -- are principally concentrated in the rural localities of the South (O'Hare, 1988; Rosenfeld, 1988; Swanson and Butler, 1988; Winter, 1988). A brief reflection on the prevalence of high school dropouts and adult illiterates offers some notion of the human capital shortcomings in the rural South.

Nearly 39 percent of nonmetro residents 25 years of age and above lacked a high school education in 1988.[2] For metropolitan Southerners, the figure was 24.4 percent (approximately 37 percent below the nonmetro percentage). More alarming are the numbers for black nonmetro adults -- approximately 55 percent never completed a high school education (Ross, 1989).

An important companion piece to the issue of school dropouts is that of adult illiteracy. In comparison to other regions of the country, the South has the highest proportion of functional illiterates. In 1975, over 27 percent of Southerners had less than a high school education. Recent figures (1987) suggest that the illiteracy numbers have gone down, but still, the South retains its position as highest of any section of the country. Closer examination of the southern regional figures uncovers significant differences on the basis of race. Regardless of the year under

investigation, black Southerners are more likely than whites to be functionally illiterate.

What is important to understand, however, is that illiteracy rates are even more dramatic in the rural South. Estimates suggest that one in four rural Southerners above the age of 25 was functionally illiterate in 1980, and for rural Blacks, the number approached 40 percent (Ross and Rosenfeld, 1988; Winter, 1988). The nonmetro South's rate of functional illiteracy was 71 percent higher than that uncovered in the metro area of the region (Rosenfeld, 1988).

In today's economic climate, labor market recruiters *broadcasts a clear message: certain levels of formal schooling are an absolute necessity if one wishes to gain access to jobs* (Harman, 1987:54). Others note that the future of the rural economy is dependent on the capacity of rural people to *work smarter, not just harder* (Reid, 1988), or on the *mental strengths of its labor force* (Johnson, 1988). These are no easy shoes to fill, particularly when the better educated youth -- the very people with whom the hope of reinvigorating the rural economy rests -- are deciding to leave their rural homesteads (O'Hare, 1988; Tweeten, 1988). In both 1985-86 and 1986-87, net outmigration from the South's nonmetropolitan areas was greatest among the better educated persons 25 years of age and above.

So, in the final analysis, one must ask how competitive can the rural South be when it has the lowest proportion of adults with a high school education, or when its percent of college graduates is 40 percent below the national average (Carlin and Ross, 1987; MDC, Inc., 1986), or when its pool of brightest residents are opting to migrate elsewhere?

PARTNERSHIP: THE KEY STRATEGY

If the rural South is to ever enjoy significant economic and social progress over the long term, then a strengthening of its human capital resources must be given top priority. But in doing so, one must guard against embracing strategies that are too parochial or narrow in their focus. It has been suggested, for example, that the problems of high school dropouts and adult illiteracy are symptomatic of an educational system gone array, and that a turnaround in these problems must commence with an overhaul of the educational system. Is this strategy sufficient, or even appropriate?

Placing the burden on the educational system alone is not satisfactory. Rather, the task of addressing the area's human capital resources must become of collective interest and concern to the **Family**, the **School**, and the **Community**. Building *partnerships* among these important elements in the locality is essential, partnerships that send a clear signal to all residents that academic performance and literacy are highly valued goals of the community - and that each partner in this triad has a critical role to perform in helping instill those values within the local setting.

Families provide the first inklings of the importance attached to education. Otto (1986) states that children learn beliefs, values and behaviors in the family context. In essence, parents set the stage for cognitive development of the child via the role modeling that they offer within the home environment.

The **school system** provides a valuable resource to the community. But, its success is largely determined by the commitment that families and communities have to its educational mission. Schools are simply a reflection of the community's prevailing attitudes and expectations (Harman, 1987). Designing useful and enriching educational experiences for students requires schools, families and community working in tandem. Shaping the goals of the school system is a community and family obligation, a responsibility that engenders success for students and schools alike when exercised.

Communities offer an important laboratory for enhancing the experiential base of their youth. They represent valuable opportunities for youth to apply knowledge gained in the classroom to real life situations in the community (National Commission on Youth, 1980). Implementation of career exploration activities, for example, where students are

placed in jobs in the community's business, government, or other sectors of the locality, offers a rare opportunity for youth to expand their understanding of the workplace environment. But, the business and governmental sectors of the community must steadfastly behind this effort if it is to be successful.

So, in the final analysis, the degree to which real progress is made in enhancing the human capital resources of the South's rural communities will be dependent upon the supportive environment that is fostered within the local arena. If families and communities demand an active role in deciding the educational agenda of the schools, and see academic excellence as an intimate part of their value systems, then substantive improvements in the human capital reserves of the community will indeed evolve over the long term (Harman, 1987).

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP: A VITAL INGREDIENT

Enlightened leaders at the local level can play an instrumental role in fostering a vision of what is possible or achievable with regard to the community's human capital resources. The term enlightened implies a leadership that is cognizant of the frailties associated with a community whose human resources are poorly educated or trained for the economic realities of today and tomorrow. It is a leadership that is attuned to those external forces that will influence the socioeconomic stability of the community in the years ahead. Unfortunately, this type of progressive, forward-thinking leadership is often not present in rural communities.

So, in a very real sense, as families, schools, and communities dedicate their energies to addressing the issues of school dropouts and adult illiterates, they must append another item to their list of human capital concerns -- the need to develop a local leadership that is capable of stirring the community to a higher level of excellence with regard to the social and economic security of its residents. Realization of this strengthened leadership will not be easy, but some strategies are worth exploring. For example, the prevalence of special interest leaders in the community represents a talented pool of individuals having the potential to evolve into generalized leaders. It is essential that opportunities be offered to help these special interest leaders develop the capacity to fulfill these generalizing roles.

A second strategy would involve extending leadership opportunities to individuals who have had little, if any, involvement in community affairs. High on the list of potential leaders should be people whose voices rarely have been part of the leadership of the past, namely, women, racial/ethnic minorities, and the disadvantaged. They must be an integral part of the leadership of rural localities (Martin and Wilkinson, 1985).

But, it is clear that the long-term hopes for rural communities will rest with their youth. As Israel and Beaulieu (1989) argue, it is time that rural areas begin developing an atmosphere that is conducive to the growth of leadership skills among their younger residents. Schools can be a key force in offering a curriculum that imparts to the students the knowledge and skills needed to participate in community improvement activities. That curriculum, however, must include opportunities to move beyond the classroom and into the real life environment of the community. *By engaging in concrete community development and community service projects, students are given the chance to envision the future of their community and to work on realizing it* (Youth Policy Institute, 1988: 28).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

It is clear that the challenges facing rural communities of the South are monumental. In fact, some might argue that the human resources problems in the rural South are far too significant and complex to address in any effective way. We urge rural communities of the South to repel such pronouncements and to begin the process of aggressively responding to their human resource shortcomings. The

commitment, the hard work, and the vision must originate and be carried out at the local level. The creation of family, school and community partnerships can be instrumental in achieving substantive improvements in the locality's human capital resources.

ENDNOTES

[1]For purposes of this report, the terms rural and nonmetro are being used interchangeably, as are those of urban and metro. Metropolitan counties are defined as areas having a large population nucleus and which encompass adjacent communities having a high degree of economic and social integration with that nucleus. This includes counties with a central city of 50,000 persons or more, and surrounding counties whose population is substantially dependent on the metropolitan county for work and other important services. All counties which do not meet the criteria of a metro county are classified as nonmetro. Approximately 80 percent of all counties in the South are designated as nonmetro.

[2]The nonmetro figure represents a modest improvement over the 1980 percentages. In 1980, over half of all nonmetro adults in the region lacked a high school education (Ross and Rosenfeld, 1988).

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SUMMARY OF COMMENTS
Roanoke Meetings

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INTRODUCTION

My task is a difficult one, it is to summarize and synthesize the many excellent ideas about the interdependence of education and economic development in rural America. My approach is to present a series of propositions that reflect what I feel have been some of the important points raised during the conference and also address some points that I think we need to remember as we move toward developing some action programs.

PROPOSITION 1:

If we attempt to justify students continuing to stay in the educational system only on the basis of how that education will enhance their work or vocational skills, we will continue to experience high drop-out rates and we will have failed to instill in students a full understanding of the long-term beneficial effects of education.

We need to recognize and advocate the broader purposes of education. We are not and should not be just in the business to educate for work skills. It is true that one of the purposes of education is to produce a labor force, a skilled workforce for our society. But education is much more than vocational training. If we do not emphasize that these other non-economic or value-based purposes of education are more important than simply acquiring work skills, then students will continue to turn-off and drop out. Why?

First, it is clear, especially in rural areas, that students can get jobs without a high school diploma. The jobs may be at minimum wage with limited opportunities for advancement or, some jobs may even pay well. In either case, if we are telling students if you want to work stay in school and yet they can find jobs without a high school diploma, then we've lost the argument.

Secondly, is is not just the issue that students can be attracted away from school by jobs. Let's also give young people credit. They are not stupid. When rural students look around them, what do they see? They see their parents or other adults who have made investments in education. What kinds of returns do they get for their investment given the nature of the rural labor market? Sometimes, no returns at all because they are unemployed, there are no jobs available. Or, there are jobs but the job offer low wages, minimum benefits, few opportunities for career advancement. In other words, the same kinds of jobs they can get if they drop out of school. Again, the stay in school to get a job argument loses out to reality.

If we only look at the returns to investments in education in terms of job skills or wages, then we have lost the argument and we have lost the students. For workers in many rural labor markets, the returns are minimal. And so, in this context, the smart student looks around and says "Hey, why I am wasting my time here when I am only going to get x number of dollars more when I can go out and get a job that at least lets me get on with my life."

For a rural student to make a realistic assessment of the returns for their educational investment they must move beyond job skills and vocational training. Education has to be justified in broader terms than economics. Finally, current efforts to "force" students to stay in school by, for example, denying driver's licenses to high school drop outs is not a solution. Why? Because staying in school is not an education. In fact, such efforts may add to the deterioration of the educational process by forcing students, who do not want to be there to stay and thereby, inviting disruptive behavior. Education has to be justified in and of itself without appeals to potential monetary gain, without coercive pressure.

Students, teachers, parents and all citizens must be committed to education as a process that has value in and of itself, not merely as a means to an end.

PROPOSITION 2:

Educational improvement must encompass more than raising achievement test scores. But expanding beyond this simplistic measure will challenge us in a variety of ways.

In the many discussions of educational improvement two themes keep reappearing -- improving scores on standardized tests and changes in the organizational structure of the schools. We must look beyond these to how education is organized so that learning is not something that is bounded by time and space.

There has been discussion of the need for opportunities for changing the schooling system so that there is more diversity in how schools and teachers go about doing their business. There is a need to create changes in the community climate -- attitudes and values -- so that people feel that education is valuable in more ways than simply getting a job. And, there is a need to recognize that educational improvement will be difficult without altering the social and economic structure of our communities by reducing inequalities and increasing opportunities. These illustrate the broader meaning of educational improvement and clearly move us far beyond simply improving test scores. But these efforts are much more difficult, and let me illustrate why.

Have researchers in education, rural sociology or agricultural economics or any other field yet addressed the development of alternative measures of educational achievement? Standardized test scores are simplistic measures of educational achievement, but they are appealing. If we argue that educational improvement must be more broadly conceived that simply improving test scores, can we answer this question: "OK, you don't want to use test scores to measure educational improvements, then how do we know that it has occurred and that we are getting a real return for our investments in education?" I suggest that we can't answer this question and our failure to do so means that we fall back to the position that some measure is better than no measure at all. If we really want to say that educational improvement involves more than simply raising test scores, then we in the academic community have to deliver some alternative and more appropriate measures. And these must be measures that are intuitively understandable to the citizens and politians who support educational improvement.

Expanding discussions and efforts beyond test scores may be politically explosive. Why? Because the organizational and structural changes we are talking about can be politically threatening. For some, a truly educated citizenry means citizens who are knowledgeable about their community; citizens who have aspirations for their families and their community; citizens who might become dissatisfied with local and school politics as they have been; citizens who might demand changes. In this sense, and educational revolution in America can become a political one. And that's threatening.

Expanding discussions and efforts beyond test scores may also be intellectually threatening. It may threaten those of us in academia, especially in Colleges of Education because it says that the old ways might not work any more. We might need to start thinking about the development of new instructional techniques, new ideas or more

creative approaches to instruction. We all know how it is for those of us who teach. It is comfortable to go in today and put on the same jacket that you have worn for the last 10 years and pull out the same notes and just do it all over again. But what we have been talking about this weekend is that this won't do anymore. The old ideas and old ways of doing must change. And that's threatening.

And so, if we really mean that educational improvement must be more than raising test scores, then we are all going to have to accept some new challenges. If we are teachers in the classroom, we may be challenged to change our style of teaching or our content. If we are school administrators, we may be challenged to accept a redistribution of power in the educational system. If we are professors in unversities, we may be challenged to rethink our research priorities or reorganize our instructional efforts. If we are citizens of our communities, we may be challenged to accept a greater responsibility for what happens inside and outside our schools. And it is going to be threatening to all of us but we must meet these challenges if we are to succeed.

PROPOSITION 3

Land grant universities, extension, public and private colleges of education, higher education in general has a vested personal interest in educational improvement succeeding at the elementary and secondary levels. All levels of the educational system are partners in a common process. We need to remember this as we begin to think about how to fund educational improvements.

Too often, the funding of education in our states has been viewed by all those involved as a zero-sum game -- every dollar given to higher education is a dollar lost to elementary or secondary education, every dollar given to the community college system is a dollar lost to universities or other 4 year institutions. In some cases, this has made the various educational players dogs fighting over the monetary bones tossed to them by state legislatures. It doesn't have to be this way and it shouldn't be.

We are all partners in education. If elementary and secondary schools falter in achieving their goals, in doing their job, then it makes it extremely difficult for the unversities to do theirs. How can we in the universities do our job if we are reduced to providing remedial classes for entering college students who have graduated from our state school systems but cannot manage to read or write above the 5th or 8th grade levels? You can't climb the educational ladder if the rungs at the bottom are rotten or broken.

I also believe that Extension has a vested interest in this process because it has been experiencing many threats to its existence. One is the declining number of persons engaged in farming which has been shrinking its traditional clientele group. But Extension is also vulnerable because the very concept of extension and its role in a modern industrial society has been challenged. The time may be here for Extension to redefine its mission to encompass a broader mandate. The Extension Service offers a ready-made, highly trained and effective system oriented, in part, to adult education. This may be the time for Extension to begin developing partnerships with other interested participants in the educational system so as to enhance learning opportunities throughout the life span.

There are a couple of other reasons why we must see ourselves as partners and recognize the mutual benefits we share in improving education. University students suffer from the lack of hands-on experiences. They have few opportunities to take basic concepts from highly specialized disciplines and integrate them into a holistic understanding of the nature of the world. Although much of the discussion of the need for experiential education at this conference has focused on elementary and secondary students, college students need these opportunities too. We do not learn to think integratively unless we are taught to think integratively. The advantage of community-based education is that it provides students with opportunities to learn to integrate the knowledge they acquired in political

science, economics, sociology, english and government and put it together in a way that helps them better understand the nature of the world in which they live.

Every university in this country should require every student, prior to receiving a degree, to spend one semester in a community internship. It would help both the students and the communities. Citizens would receive information in a variety of forms about the physical and human resources and needs that are present in their communities. Students would learn what it is to be in the real world and have a chance to begin applying their hard-won knowledge in a structured setting. Studies on the influence of experiential education, which is an option for many college students, clearly demonstrate that experiential education adds to the marketability of the students, gives them a better sense of career choices, and is a factor that helps explain later career advancement. Cooperative partnerships between universities and local school systems could make experiential education programs profitable for all participants.

PROPOSITION 4:

Building partnerships or establishing cooperative efforts is not easy. Partnerships among school districts, among communities are difficult to establish. We have to work at building partnerships with investments of devoted, focused energy.

We stress competition, individualism, self-reliance and personal success in our schools. We do not emphasize cooperation, we emphasize competition. We do little to encourage or teach cooperation. Indeed, we typically penalize cooperation among students, we call it cheating. Moreover, if we look at the history of community in America, what we find is that communities historically have fought with each other -- for jobs, state allocations, prestige, or whatever. And that is the way it has been. Even on those things that intuitively it would be smart to cooperate, such as a regional waste management plan, communities seldom, if ever cooperate. Historically, we have always been willing to let our neighbor hand as long as the rope did not reach us. There has not been a sense that we are all in this boat together. Instead, what we have done is use the oars to beat up our neighbors.

If educational improvement and rural economic development are to occur, we must have cooperation. And this is not going to come out of the goodness of our hearts or the compelling logic for cooperation. Rather, we must have new policies and programs that gently or otherwise force us to cooperate in our own best interests.

How can this be done? We can offer tax incentives to businesses that become involved in working partnerships with their local schools or political systems. We can have incentive grants that say that the only way you are going to get the money to do whatever is by cooperating with those who share a common interest. We can offer capital improvement funds and say the the only valid use of these funds is in regional development efforts. Cooperation does not just happen, it must be built into programs.

One program that exemplifies this sort of cooperative effort is Forward in the Fifth. Forward in the Fifth is a regional community-based effort to improve educational achievement in the fifth Congressional District of Kentucky. Begun in 1986, Forward in the Fifth is a coalition of business and community and education leaders and citizens. Their philosophy is that to improve education parents and children and everyone in the community must become active participants in education. Forward in the Fifth has a wide variety of programs at the local school district level but also works with a consortium of colleges and universities to increase the percentage of high school graduates that go to college. In a few short years, Forward in the Fifth has made remarkable progress by stressing cooperation and shared ideas and by helping people to understand that education is in everybody's best interest. (For more information about these programs, write or call Forward in the Fifth, 433 Chestnut Street, Berea KY 40403, (606)986-23773). If it can happen in the fifth Congressional District of

Kentucky with one of the highest drop-out rates and highest rates of adult illiteracy in the nation, it can happen in any community.

PROPOSITION 5:

If we succeed in educational improvements, improving the quality of rural human capital, but do not expand the number and quality of employment opportunities, then rural areas will experience no net gains in the quality of rural human resources. The newly educated will simply leave for better employment opportunities in urban places.

Historically, rural areas have served as the source of educated workers for the expansion of urban industrial markets. In the 1930s, Kolb and others at the U.S Department of Agriculture estimated that rural communities spent millions educating rural youth for urban markets. Things haven't changed.

If rural economic development does not succeed in expanding/improving employment opportunities than the best and the brightest will continue to drain from rural communities, continuing the depletion of the ability of rural communities to sustain economic growth.

PROPOSITION 6:

Educational improvement is a necessary but not a sufficient impetus for rural economic development. Likewise, rural economic development is a necessary but not a sufficient explanation for educational improvement.

Research by Jerry Skees and Lou Swanson at the University of Kentucky shows that educational attainment is the single best predictor of rural employment levels, family income, poverty rates and the size of local tax bases.

The schools are partners with families, businesses and political leaders in community economic development. However, the primary purpose of rural schools is not to educate youth to play a part in our local economic development; they should be prepared to contribute to their local economy wherever they choose to live. But rural schools can help meet some of the specific manpower needs for local economic development by strengthening their relationships with local business and other community leaders. For example, in Versailles, KY, the local schools run a GED program for the Texas Instruments plant. Workers can attend classes during the work day and over time, receive their GED. The company gets more qualified and more satisfied workers and sees this as a good return on its investment. In other communities, teachers "shadow" workers in a manufacturing plant to learn more about the skills that are required to perform the many jobs in the firm and then use this information in their instructional programs.

Rural economic development, on the other hand, entails multiple strategies and goals which while including a sound educational system, go far beyond. Rural economic development must also be concerned with: more jobs, more full-time jobs, better paying jobs, improved family incomes, improved quality of life, a more diverse economic base and; a positive community attitude toward building for the future. All of these are necessary factors in creating and sustaining economic growth, doing just one or two will not build strong communities.

PROPOSITION 7:

The crisis in rural education and the rural economy is not just the concern of rural Americans. Just as benefits spillover to urban places so do the costs. We cannot have islands of urban wealth, employment, economic vitality and learning is a sea of rural poverty, economic stagnation and limited educational attainment.

Rural problems are not isolated in rural areas. These problems "migrate" to the cities with costs "shared" by all in taxes, welfare programs, social service requirements, etc. There is a moral imperative based on our cultural commitment to equity and fairness to insure that an entire segment of our population

not be condemned to poverty and a disadvantaged life by the simple fact of their place of residence. We all, urban and rural residents, are travellers together, our futures inextricably linked.

SOME CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

As I've listened throughout this conference, other questions and issues have come to mind. These are questions whose answer will shape where we go from here.

Do we, as individuals, have a role in this process of educational improvement and rural development?

Are we involved personally in working for educational improvements or economic development? Do we act on our intellectual assertion of the importance of civic responsibility? How many of us have ever attended a fiscal court or city council meeting: How many of us know who are our magistrates or councillors? How many of us attend school board meetings as informed citizens not as participants? How many of have any notion of how economic development happens in our communities?

Why are teachers and university faculty members often the most politically inactive members of a community? Is it because we delude ourselves into thinking that the things we do for our jobs are a sufficient basis for civic responsibility? All of us are part of the solution for improving school and increasing the capacity of our hometowns for economic development. It is two-faced to tell others to become involved from the comfort of our easy chairs.

Is it worth trying to "save" rural communities? Would it be more efficient to use the national resources to simply pay the costs of moving most rural residents to urban places?

Don't laugh, this is a serious question, one that has been and will continue to be debated at the national level. We cannot justify the survival of rural communities from an economic basis. The contribution of rural economies to the total national wealth is quite limited, while the costs of rural economic developmet vis-a-vis derived benefits (i.e. returns to investments) are quite high. So, how do we justify nurturing the life of rural communities?

I believe there are value-based, non-economic reasons for preserving and sustaining rural communities. The larger society needs to know the opportunities and diversity that rural communities offer are still available. As the level of urbanization has increased, civic responsibility and community citizenship has declined as Bellah notes in Habits of the Heart. Perhaps Jefferson was right, the survival of rural communities is essential to the survival of a democratic society.

Should we look to the needs of youth as one type of economic niche for rural entrepreneurs?

Rural youth face limited opportunities as compared to their urban counterparts in areas of recreation, vocational/career counseling, mental health services, pre-employment counseling and health services/counseling. Can rural entrepreneurs provide economically profitable, yet essential services in these areas? How can we as researchers and practitioners contribute to the identification of economic niches for rural entrepreneurs?

Is there a "development treadmill?" Do economic advantages accrue only to those communities early to adopt particular development strategies? We have heard alot of ideas about economic development. If we all rush back to our communities and try to put them into practice will we all experience the same success or, is the demand for rural crafts limited so that only those who enter the marketplace early will succeed? Is there, in other words, a "magic bullet" for economic development, tht one thing that if we just do it, all our problems would be solved? Or, do we need to work at identifying a multitude of development strategies, that can be used by communities at different levels of development with different economic bases and with different population characteristics? If we were asked this question by a genie ready to give us what we wanted, what would we ask for?

We leave with many challenges and many questions. What is important is that at this conference, people with different interests, backgrounds and experiences have come together to address some common problems. This is our first step down that road of cooperation. "Every beginning is a consequence, every beginning ends something." Let this beginning be the end of the acceptance of second-class status for rural education, rural economies and rural peoples.

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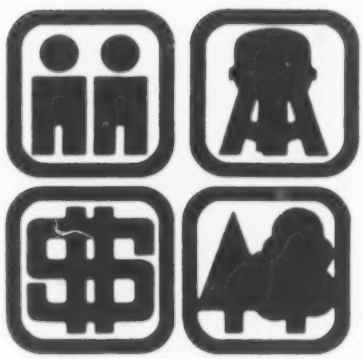

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